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ABSTRACT

In 1990-91, the Austin Independent School District (Texas) received a 3-year grant under Title VII to serve a population of limited-English-proficient high school students called "newcomers" (i.e., recent arrivals to the United States). In addition to their limited English proficiency, these students, who have typically suffered interrupted educations, have a wide range of literacy skills. The program provides a sheltered environment for its students, with small classes and intensive English instruction in addition to other academic subjects. Students are expected to move to the regular high school curriculum after a year with continued support in English. In 1993-94, 120 students were served by the Title VII Newcomers Program. In spite of the difficulties they had encountered, newcomers typically demonstrated a commitment to attending school and moving forward with their educations and considered the program very helpful. They demonstrated an average gain of 11 raw score points on a language assessment battery. Recommendations for the 1994-95 school year, the final year of federal support, include a call for additional student support at the end of the Newcomers' Program. A program evaluation checklist is attached. (Contains 1 chart, 32 figures, and 4 references.) (SLD)

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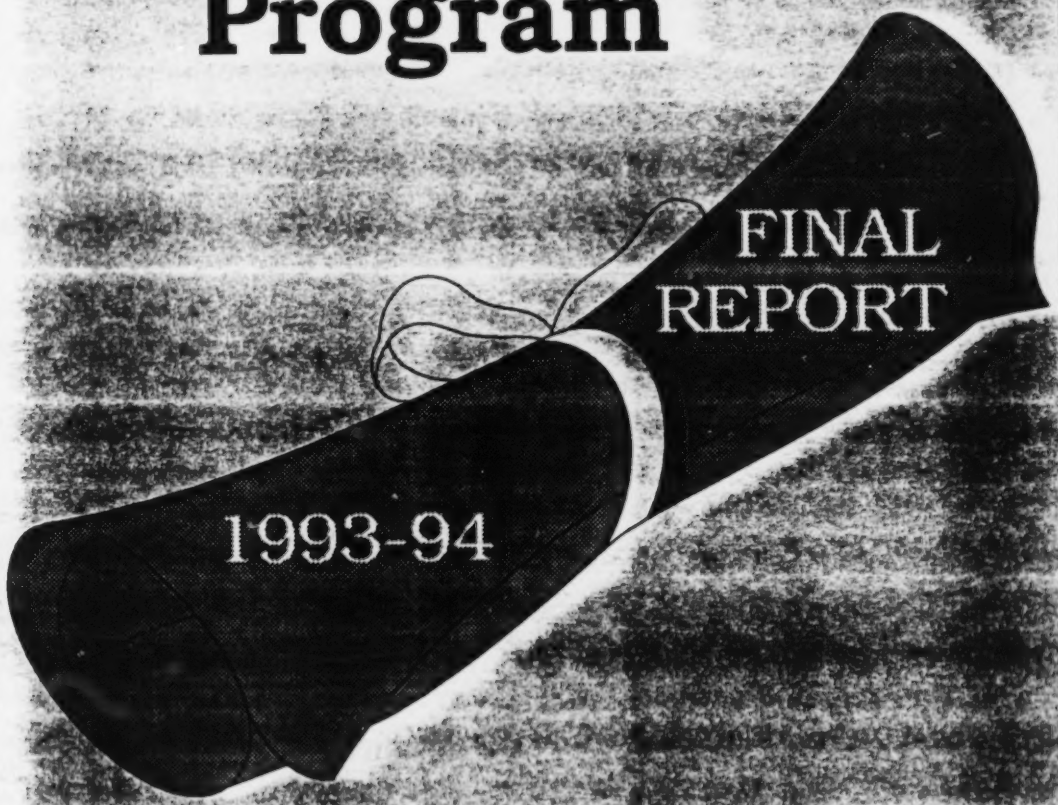

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TITLE VII NEWCOMERS PROGRAM 1993-94 FINAL REPORT
Executive Summary

Austin Independent School District
Office of Research and Evaluation

Author: Rosa María González

Program Description

In 1990-91, AISD received a three-year Title VII grant to serve a population of limited-English-proficient (LEP) high school students called "newcomers." In addition to being limited English proficient, these students have recently arrived in the United States. The Title VII grant was funded for its fourth year in spring 1993. For the purpose of the program, *a newcomer is defined as a student who has been in the U.S. for one year or less.* These students typically have limited or interrupted schooling in their home countries and a wide range of literacy skills. Increasing numbers of immigrants continue enrolling at three high school campuses, Austin, Lanier, and Reagan. To serve the special needs of such students AISD developed its Title VII Newcomers Program. All language backgrounds are eligible for the program, with Spanish the home language of most of the students (81%).

The goal of the Title VII Newcomers Program is to improve the English language proficiency and the achievement skills of the target students. The program is designed to provide a sheltered environment for its participants. Class size is kept relatively small, and the students receive three hours of intensive English instruction daily. This instruction includes listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary development. The students receive credits for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL I and II) and Reading Improvement. In addition, students may enroll in a variety of subject areas (e.g., pre-algebra, algebra, biology, typing, Spanish, art, and physical education) to complete their schedules. The program model has a teacher and a teacher assistant assigned to each of the three campuses. An additional teacher was hired full time at one of the campuses because of increased enrollment. It is the intent of the program for the students to be mainstreamed into the regular high school curriculum after one year with support in either ESL or sheltered English. Because of the mobility of this target population, a student who enters the program late in the school year, or is unable to make the transition within a year may continue the next year. The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) located on each campus can recommend that the newcomer continue in the program.

In the 1993-94 school year, 120 students were served by the Title VII Newcomers Program.

Major Findings

1. Title VII students are predominantly low income, overage for their grade, dominant or monolingual in a language other than English, and below grade level academically. Nonetheless, these at-risk students demonstrated a commitment to attending school and moving forward with their education. (Pages 7-9)

2. Title VII newcomers demonstrated an average gain of 11 raw score points on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) from pre- to posttest, which indicates they are improving their abilities in English. (Pages 10-11)

3. Compared with other, nonprogram LEP students used as a comparison group, the Title VII newcomers performed at a slightly lower rate on measures of school success (credits earned and attendance) and slightly higher on other success measures (grade point average). The obtained dropout rate for the newcomers was lower than the predicted rate. (Pages 15-19)

4. The opinion of the staff in general was that the program was very beneficial in assisting students to make the transition to English and to the school environment. (Pages 33-35)

5. In the opinion of the students, the program was very helpful as they acquired English skills, learned to use the computers, felt welcome in their schools, and felt confident about staying in school. (Pages 29-32)

6. Interviews with graduating former newcomers revealed several recurring themes related to successful completion of school. Former newcomers identified the following factors as helpful to them in attaining their high school diploma: constant support from family and friends, early commitment and perseverance in attaining a diploma, integration into the school culture, and assistance from a teacher in a special program, and/or a school mentor. (Pages 42-43)

Budget Implications

Mandate: Required by external funding agent

Funding Amount: $112,770

Funding Source: Federal

Implications: The program addresses AISD's first and second strategic objectives:
1) "One hundred percent of all students who enter AISD will graduate," and
2) "Every student will function at his/her optimal level of achievement and will progress successfully through the system."

The 1994-95 school year will be the fifth and final year monies will be available for the Title VII Newcomers Program. The District has been assisted by the U.S. Department of Education for four years in providing continuous special services, instructional materials, and computer technology to address some of the distinct academic and linguistic needs of recently arrived high school immigrant students.

Recommendations

The program model of the ESL teacher collaborating with the teacher assistant in addressing both the instructional and cultural adjustment needs of immigrant students has worked well for the past four years. The 1994-95 school year, the final year of federal support, should be used by the campus leadership teams (CLT's) and the bilingual coordinators to make plans for the continuation of educational services for immigrant students.

Most newcomers make the necessary adjustment to the school environment during their year in the Title VII Program. To increase their probability of remaining in school, the support provided to the immigrant students should be continued through other programs after their year in the Newcomers Program.

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PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS SUMMARY

TITLE VII NEWCOMERS PROGRAM, 1993-94

Program	Rating	Allocation (Cost)	Number of Students Served	Cost Per Student	Number of Dropouts Predicted	Number of Dropouts Obtained	Predicted Dropouts who Stayed in School (Effect) #	Predicted Dropouts who Stayed in School (Effect) %	Cost Per student Kept in School (Cost/ Effect)
Newcomers Program (Title VII) Funding Source: External Grades: 9-12	+	$112,770	120	$940	120*	11	109	91	$1,035

* All students in the program are at risk of dropping out, by definition.

Rating is expressed as contributing to any of the 5 AISD strategic objectives.

+	*Positive*, needs to be kept and expanded
0	*Not significant*, needs to be improved and modified
-	*Negative*, needs major modification or replacement
Blank	*Unknown*, may have positive or negative impact on other indicators; however, impact on the five AISD strategic objectives in unknown.

Cost is the expense over the regular District per student expenditure of about $4,000.

0	*No cost* or minimal cost
$	*Indirect costs* and overhead, but no separate budget
$$	*Some direct costs*, but under $500 per student
$$$	*Major direct costs* for teachers, staff, and/or equipment in the range of $500 per student

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CONCLUSIONS

In its fourth year (1993-94), the Title VII Newcomers Program provided a wide range of services. Limited-English-proficient (LEP) students, their parents, their teachers, and the teacher assistants benefitted from the Title VII funds. Despite considerable obstacles of language and cultural adjustment, program students, like their predecessors, demonstrated their commitment to attend school and move forward with their education.

- The newcomers compare favorably to a similar group of nonprogram students on measures of school success (e.g., credits earned, attendance, grade point average, and dropout rate).

- Program staff and students have reported that the program has been beneficial in assisting students to acquire English skills and to feel more comfortable in school.

- The program model of the ESL teacher collaborating with the teacher assistant in addressing both the instructional needs of immigrant students has worked well for the past four years. Former newcomers have continued with their commitment to remain in school until graduation. Twenty-six former program students graduated in May and summer of 1994.

For these reasons, the Title VII Newcomers Program should be seen as successful in helping students to acquire some of the necessary skills essential for academic success.

TITLE VII NEWCOMERS PROGRAM, 1993-94

FINAL REPORT

- INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

For many years, AISD has been awarded U.S. Department of Education Title VII funds to supplement its regular bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. In the 1989-90 school year, as the District was completing a five-year grant cycle which helped to serve middle school and high school LEP students, it became apparent that increasing numbers of LEP students who were new arrivals to the U.S. had begun enrolling in District high schools. The largest enrollment of recently arrived immigrants was at Austin, Lanier, and Reagan High Schools. For Bilingual/ESL staff, it was clear that the standard offering of ESL classes supplementing the regular school curriculum would not be adequate to address the needs of this growing population. The program was developed to make these three campuses Newcomer centers. Targeted students could then be provided with the additional assistance needed for them to acquire skills in the English language, become oriented to the U.S. culture, and begin as soon as possible to earn the necessary credits to satisfy the requirements for high school graduation.

In its first year, 1990-91, the program served a total of 108 students; in its second year, 1991-92, the program assisted 104 students. During its third year, 1992-93, the program provided services for 134 newcomers, and in its fourth year, 1993-94, the program served 120 students.

By August 1991, the Title VII Newcomers Program was well established in three high schools and able to accommodate students from their respective attendance areas as well as curriculum transfer students. Evaluation findings for the first three years may be found in ORE publications 90.38, 91.22, and 92.34.

The District applied for a continuation grant for a fourth year of program operation, and the extension was granted. During 1993-94, the program staff continued to focus on providing services to recently arrived immigrant students, interviewed former newcomers to provide additional information and/or services, and resumed their collaboration with school personnel to build greater local capacity to serve immigrant students. In fall 1993, program staff were notified of the opportunity to submit a grant extension for a fifth and final year of program implementation. In spring 1994, the District was informed by the U.S. Department of Education that grant monies had been allocated for a final year of program implementation in 1994-95. The fifth program year of the Title VII Newcomers Program will continue with its established format and will place a concerted effort on working very closely with the appropriate school personnel to assure ongoing services for immigrant language minority students in the high schools.

LEP Population in AISD

The trend in the District for the past seven years (1987-88 through 1993-94) has been a steady increase in the number of LEP students. As the number of language minority students continues to increase, so too must efforts to meet their specific learning needs. For the past four years, the Title VII Newcomers Program has been an attempt to address those needs and the growth in the language minority population.

The LEP students have made up an increasing percentage of the AISD population each year over this period. In the 1987-88 school year LEP students comprised 7.7% of the District's students; in 1993-94 the percentage had risen to 11.4%. Figure 1 reflects this upward trend.

FIGURE 1
LEP STUDENTS (SERVED PLUS PARENT REFUSALS), AS A PERCENT OF AISD POPULATION, 1987-88 THROUGH 1993-94

SCHOOL YEAR	# OF LEP STUDENTS	# OF AISD STUDENTS	% OF LEP STUDENTS
1993-94	8,089	70,665	11.4%
1992-93	7,373	68,900	10.7%
1991-92	6,485	67,061	9.7%
1990-91	5,706	65,101	8.8%
1989-90	5,173	63,156	8.2%
1988-89	4,870	61,704	7.9%
1987-88	4,615	60,312	7.7%

"Refusal" = LEP students' parents refused bilingual services.

Not only are LEP students an increasing percentage of AISD's student population, they also represent an increasing percentage of students new to AISD. In 1992-93, almost one half of the new students arriving in AISD were language minority students; in 1993-94, 41% were language minority students (see Figure 2).

FIGURE 2
LEP STUDENTS AS A PERCENT OF THE OVERALL INCREASE IN AISD STUDENTS, 1988-89 THROUGH 1993-94

SCHOOL YEAR	INCREASE IN # OF LEP STUDENTS	INCREASE IN # OF AISD STUDENTS	% OF THE INCREASE WHO ARE LEP
1993-94	+716	1,765	41%
1992-93	+888	1,839	48%
1991-92	+779	1,960	40%
1990-91	+533	1,945	27%
1989-90	+303	1,416	21%
1988-89	+255	1,428	18%

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

The grant awarded to AISD by the U.S. Department of Education specified that there be an independent evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the District's Title VII program. In 1993-94, as in the three previous years, the evaluation focused on the following main questions:

- Did the Title VII newcomers improve their English acquisition as a result of the program?
- Did the Title VII newcomers improve their academic achievement skills as a result of the program?
- Did the program effectively orient the students to their new life in the U.S.?
- Has the presence of the teacher assistant in the Title VII Newcomers Program classroom had a positive impact on the students?

Evaluation data were collected from a variety of sources:

- The Student Master File and the LEP File provided basic information about the students such as home language, Language Assessment Battery (LAB) scores, language dominance, school mobility, and program entry and exit dates.
- ORE's generic evaluation system (GENESYS) supplied demographic and achievement information on both former and current newcomer students.
- Interviews were conducted with program staff to obtain and update student information and to gather opinion information about the Title VII Newcomers Program.
- Administrators and Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) chairpersons completed a staff survey in which they expressed their perceptions about the program. The teachers, teacher assistants, and program coordinator were interviewed at the end of the school year to gather their opinions about the program.
- Student surveys were completed by program participants in an effort to collect their assessment of the Title VII Newcomers Program, including the use of computers, feeling welcome in their schools, their assessment of their language improvement, helpfulness of program staff, and other aspects of the program.
- A questionnaire was administered to former newcomers (1990-91, 1991-92, and 1992-93) by the teacher assistant, to gather information concerning students' perceptions about their grades, status on graduation requirements, need for tutorial assistance, and other relevant issues.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

In 1990-91, AISD was awarded a three-year Title VII grant to serve a population of limited-English-proficient (LEP) high school students termed "newcomers." In addition to being LEP, these students had recently immigrated to the U.S. The program was funded for a fourth year during the 1993 spring semester. For the purpose of the program, *a newcomer was defined as a student who had been in the United States for one year or less*. These students typically have limited or interrupted schooling in their home countries and a wide range of literacy skills. Increasing numbers of immigrants continue to enroll at three high school campuses; Austin, Lanier, and Reagan. To serve the special needs of such students AISD developed its Title VII Newcomers Program. All language backgrounds are eligible for the program, with Spanish being the primary language of most (81%) of the students.

The goal of the Title VII Newcomers Program is to improve the English language proficiency and the achievement skills of the target students. The program is designed to provide a sheltered environment for its participants. Class size is kept relatively small, and the students receive three hours of intensive English instruction daily which includes listening, speaking, writing, grammar, and vocabulary development. The students receive credit for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL I and II) and Reading Improvement. In addition, students may enroll in a variety of subject areas (e.g., physical science, algebra, biology, typing, art, and physical education) to complete their schedules. The program model has a teacher and teacher assistant assigned to each of the three campuses, but this year because of increased enrollment in one of the high schools a second teacher was hired full time at that school. It is the intent of the program for the students to be mainstreamed after one year into the regular high school English curriculum with support in either ESL or sheltered English. Because of the mobility of immigrant students, a student who entered the program late in the school year, or was unable to make the transition could continue in the program. The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) located on each campus can recommend that a student continue in the program.

In the 1993-94 school year, 120 students were served by the Title VII Newcomers Program.

1993-94 BUDGET

The total budget for the 1993-94 Title VII Newcomers Program was $112,770--$13,230 less than the amount awarded the District during the third year of program operation.

The 1993-94 Title VII Newcomers Program had a working budget of $112,770. The program received $13,230 less than the previous year. The $13,230 was deducted from the following budget categories: salaries, supplies and materials, operating expenses, and capital outlay. The funds provided salaries for three teacher assistants and a part-time evaluation associate, multilevel educational materials, upgrades for existing computers and software, and staff development for the three program sites at Austin, Lanier, and Reagan High Schools. **The cost per student in 1993-94 was $940 in addition to the average per-pupil allocation.**

Monies provided by the local Bilingual Program were used to pay the salaries of the four full time ESL teachers. The local contribution also paid for the materials and supplies used by the evaluation associate and the cost of printing the final evaluation report required by federal regulations.

Figure 3 shows the budget for the Title VII Newcomers Program and the contributions made by the local Bilingual Program.

FIGURE 3
BUDGET FOR THE 1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS PROGRAM, INCLUDING CONTRIBUTION BY THE LOCAL BILINGUAL PROGRAM

BUDGET CATEGORIES	TITLE VII PROGRAM	LOCAL BILINGUAL PROGRAM
Salaries	$89,849	$93,296
Purchased Services	8,500	0
Supplies and Materials	8,359	350
Out-of-District Travel	3,000	0
Indirect Costs	3,062	0
TOTAL	**$112,770**	**$93,646**

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Like the newcomers from the previous three years, the fourth-year program students are predominantly from low-income families, overage for their grade (and consequently at risk), and monolingual or dominant in a primary language other than English.

The ethnic diversity of the newcomer population has changed to some extent from last year. This year the program had more students from Spanish-speaking countries and fewer from other countries than in previous years. Most (81%) of the 120 students served were from Spanish-speaking countries; among these countries were Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Venezuela, Peru, Colombia, and Cuba. Of the remaining students, 14% were from Vietnam, 2% from India, less than 1% from Ethiopia, and 3% from an unknown country of origin. Nearly all (87%) were from low-income families and were either dominant (87%) or monolingual (8%) in their primary language.

The age range of the newcomers was from 13 to 19, with 83% between the ages of 13 and 17. Age is an important variable because being overage for grade (two or more years older than expected for grade level as of September 1) is one of the key indicators of a student's being "at risk" for dropping out. Of the newcomers, 55% were overage for their grade level. Age is not the only variable that places newcomers in an at-risk category; their limited English proficiency, socioeconomic status, and their literacy skills in the primary language are all contributing factors. The remaining 45% of students are not overage, but they continue to be at risk because of their lack of English proficiency.

Figure 4 shows the grade levels of Title VII program students.

FIGURE 4
GRADE LEVELS OF 1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS

GRADE	# OF STUDENTS	% OF STUDENTS
9	88	73.3%
10	22	18.3%
11	10	8.3%
TOTAL	120	99.9%

Figure 5 illustrates the language dominance of the newcomers.

FIGURE 5
LANGUAGE DOMINANCE OF 1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS

DOMINANCE	# OF STUDENTS	% OF STUDENTS
A/Monolingual	10	8.3%
B/Dominant	104	86.6%
C/Bilingual	3	2.5%
Not on File	3	2.5%
TOTAL	120	99.9%

Figure 6 shows the number and percent of students from rural and urban areas in their home countries.

FIGURE 6
URBAN/RURAL ORIGIN OF THE 1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS

AREA	# OF STUDENTS	% OF STUDENTS
Urban	60	50.0%
Rural	51	42.5%
No Answer*	9	7.5%
TOTAL	**120**	**100.0%**

* Students did not answer this item on the Student Intake Form.

Figure 7 shows the countries of origin of the Title VII newcomers. Most (81%) of the newcomers come from Spanish-speaking countries, including Mexico and countries in Central and South America.

FIGURE 7
COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN OF
1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	# OF STUDENTS	% OF STUDENTS
Spanish-speaking Countries	97	81.0%
Vietnam	17	14.1%
India	2	1.6%
Ethiopia	1	.8%
No Answer*	3	2.5%
TOTAL	**120**	**100.0%**

* Students did not answer this item on the Student Intake Form.

Figure 8 illustrates the years of education the program students had in their home countries. When compared to previous years' students, the fourth-year students showed a slight variation in their educational backgrounds. More students indicated they had completed primary and secondary school, and fewer students completed preparatory school. Most (81%) of the newcomers had primary and secondary schooling (defined as grades 1-9), and 15% had preparatory schooling (grades 10-12).

FIGURE 8
1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS' EDUCATION
IN THEIR HOME COUNTRIES

SCHOOL GRADES	# OF STUDENTS	% OF STUDENTS
0-6th Grade	24	20.0%
7th-9th Grade	73	60.8%
10th-12th Grade	18	15.0%
No Answer*	5	4.1%
TOTAL	**120**	**99.9%**

* Students did not answer this item on the Student Intake Form.

Figure 9 illustrates the length of time the newcomers had been in the U.S. prior to enrolling in the program. Most (62%) of the newcomers had been in the country between 0-8 months. In previous years most of the newcomers had been the country between 0-4 months. In 1993-94, a few more newcomers had been in the United States for a slightly longer period of time prior to entering the program.

FIGURE 9
LENGTH OF TIME IN THE U.S. FOR
1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS

TIME IN THE U.S.	# OF STUDENTS	% OF STUDENTS
0 months to 4 months	52	43.3%
5 months to 8 months	22	18.3%
9 months to 12 months	24	20.0%
More than 1 year	13	10.8%
No Answer*	9	7.5%
TOTAL	**120**	**99.9%**

* Students did not answer this item on the Student Intake Form.

OUTCOMES

The Title VII newcomers demonstrated on average gain of 11 raw score points on the Language Assessment Battery, indicating that the students are improving their abilities in English.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

1993-94 Student Performance on the LAB

The Language Assessment Battery (LAB) is a language proficiency test used to evaluate English oral language acquisition. The LAB is designed to assess, in English and Spanish, the reading, writing, listening comprehension, and speaking of students in kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12). Level III, grades 7-12, has a total of 92 items. Test 1 (Listening), Test 2 (Reading), and Test 3 (Writing) are group administered, and Test 4 (Speaking) is individually administered. All four tests are included in Level III of the LAB. The scores of the LAB fall into two categories: raw scores (number of items right) and derived scores, e.g., percentile ranks. Raw scores by themselves have limitations since scores differ in meaning across tests and levels. Derived scores on the LAB are based on the raw scores obtained by the city-wide sample of students tested in the norming study in 1976. The LAB is published by the Houghton Mifflin Company. The LAB has been used for many years by AISD to measure the English language skills of LEP students.

Depending upon dates of program entry, all newcomers were given a pretest in spring or fall 1993, or in spring 1994. The students were administered a posttest in January or May 1994. Pretest and posttest scores were compared to determine if the students, on the average, had improved their English proficiency. Improved performance would indicate increased proficiency in English.

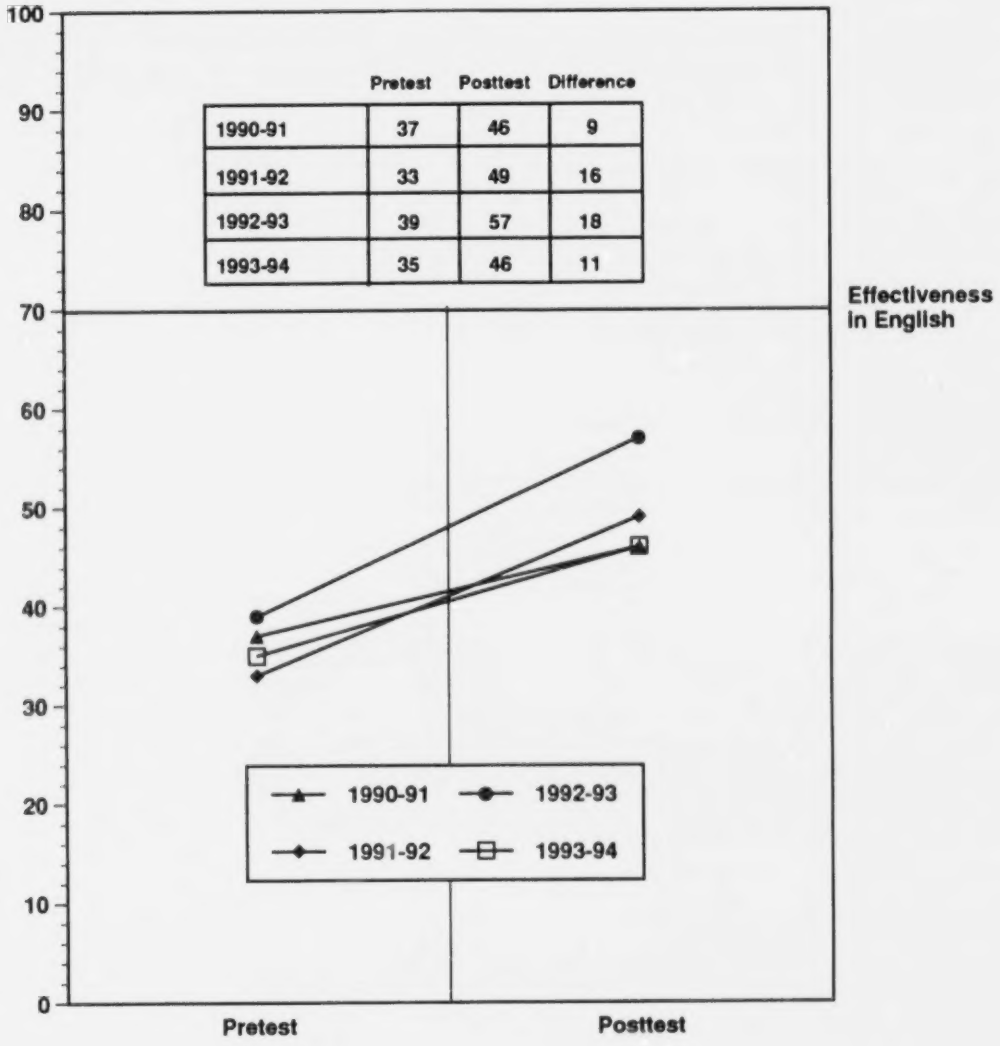
A total of 65 students from the three campuses took both pre- and posttests during the periods given above. The remainder of the newcomers can be accounted for in the following manner: 26 students withdrew during the school year; the scores of the 23 students that enrolled during the 1994 spring semester were not included because of their length of time in the program; and 6 students' scores were incomplete or unavailable due to absence. The average raw score for the pretest was 35, while average raw score for the posttest was 46. **An average gain of 11 raw score points indicated that the students were learning more English.**

What, specifically, this gain represents is unclear, however. Title VII newcomers were tested in the fall or spring semesters depending on date of program entry; therefore; the number of months between pretest and posttest varied across students. Individual gains were not compared; only the group average was considered. Because of the variance in the pre- and posttest time periods, this year's Title VII student scores may not be comparable to those of previous years. Nonetheless, the performance of previous years' students provides a context by which to assess the gains made by this year's students.

Although the newcomers are learning more English, they are not yet proficient in English. In 1976, the New York City Public Schools, in which the LAB was normed, used the 20th percentile rank, which corresponds to a raw score in the mid-70's, as the cutoff for what it termed "effectiveness" in English. Although this is an arbitrary cutoff point, it can be used in giving meaning to the Title VII newcomers's 1993-94 average posttest score of 46. For these students to score 70+ on the LAB, they would need to answer approximately 52% more of these items correctly. Gains were clearly accomplished by the students, but the group continues to be in need of specialized instruction.

Figure 10 shows the four groups of newcomers and their respective performances on the LAB.

FIGURE 10
TITLE VII NEWCOMERS' AVERAGE LAB SCORE GAINS, 1993-94
COMPARED WITH THE PREVIOUS THREE YEARS



There was no group exactly like the newcomers in terms of recent arrival into the United States, or for whom LAB scores are available within the time frame (one year) of the Title VII Newcomers Program. However, for comparison purposes, the Title VII newcomers were compared to a group consisting of nonprogram students whose language dominance is A or B, dominant or monolingual in the primary language, and who were attending AISD high schools. The students were compared in terms of achievement test scores and other measures of school success, including dropout rates, credits earned, grade point average, and grade retention rates. The number in the comparison group was 390.

93.19

ACHIEVEMENT

The Title VII newcomers performed below District averages on the TAAS. The students in the comparison group performed better that the newcomers on all three tests. Two (8%) sophomore newcomers successfully completed the Reading and Writing Tests, and one (4%) the Mathematics Test. Four (36%) junior newcomers passed the Mathematics Test, and one (9%) passed the Writing Test.

TAAS

The Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) is the state-mandated, criterion-referenced testing program which was administered to students in grades 3-12 in 1993-94. During the 1993 fall semester, the students in grades 11 and 12 were administered the Exit Level Tests in mathematics, reading, and writing. In the 1994 spring semester, the Writing Test was administered to students in grades 4 and 8; the Reading and Mathematics Tests were taken by students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. In addition, the TAAS Science and Social Studies Tests were administered to students in grades 4 and 8; and in the 1994 spring semester, the State of Texas introduced End-of-Course Tests in Algebra I and Biology I. In an effort to provide all high school students with ample opportunities to pass the TAAS, all three tests were administered at the Exit Level (grades 10, 11, and 12) on two separate occasions during the 1994 spring semester. The Exit Level Tests must be mastered as part of graduation requirements and are offered two times during the school year, and once during the summer. The TAAS Coordinator Manual states, "A recent immigrant with limited English proficiency may delay only one time the administration of the exit level assessment instrument until his or her 11th grade. The term "recent immigrant" is defined as an immigrant entering the United States during the current or previous school year. Before the fall administration of the exit level test, each school district shall provide an appropriate intensive language program for any student whose exit level administration was deferred until grade 11."

The Exit Level TAAS was administered to 35 newcomers and 159 LEP students in the comparison group in March 1994. The students compared in all three groups were sophomores and juniors.

See Figure 11 for TAAS results for newcomers, the comparison group, and the District.

FIGURE 11
TAAS RESULTS, 1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS VS. COMPARISON GROUP AND DISTRICT

SUBJECT	TITLE VII NEWCOMERS				COMPARISON GROUP				DISTRICT			
	GRADE				GRADE				GRADE			
	10th		11th		10th		11th		10th		11th	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
READING												
Passing	2	8.3	0	0.0	11	11.2	23	37.7	2,306	75	184	45
Not Passing	5	20.8	8	72.7	72	73.4	36	59.0	776	25	223	55
Absent	2	8.3	2	78.1	8	8.2	2	3.2	--	--	--	--
Other	15	62.5	1	9.0	7	7.1	0	0.0	--	--	--	--
Total	24	99.9	11	99.8	98	99.9	61	99.9	3,082	100	407	100
MATHEMATICS												
Passing	1	4.2	4	36.4	17	17.3	31	50.8	1,693	54	256	30
Not Passing	4	16.6	4	36.4	70	71.4	29	47.5	1,430	46	589	70
Absent	3	12.5	2	18.1	4	4.1	1	1.6	--	--	--	--
Other	16	66.6	1	9.0	7	7.1	0	0.0	--	--	--	--
Total	24	99.9	11	99.9	98	99.9	61	99.9	3,123	100	845	100
WRITING												
Passing	2	8.3	1	9.0	14	14.3	20	32.8	2,360	77	100	32
Not Passing	4	16.6	7	63.6	70	71.4	40	65.5	687	23	210	68
Absent	3	12.5	2	18.1	7	7.1	1	1.6	--	--	--	--
Other	15	62.5	1	9.0	7	7.1	0	0.0	--	--	--	--
Total	24	99.9	11	99.7	98	99.9	61	99.9	3,047	100	310	100

Title VII Newcomers (N=35)
Comparison Group (N=159)
District [(N=3,489 in Reading), (N=3,968 in Mathematics), (N=3,357 in Writing)]

NAPT

The performance of the Title VII newcomers on the NAPT is well below that of the District and generally below that of the comparison group.

AISD administers a norm-referenced test to all students in grades 1-11 (except first graders at six schools) who are capable of attaining a valid score. In the spring of 1994, at the high school level, the state-mandated Norm-referenced Assessment Program for Texas (NAPT) was administered at grades 9-11.

Figure 12 shows the performance of the Title VII newcomers who were administered the NAPT in spring 1994, as well as the comparison group and all AISD high school students.

FIGURE 12
NAPT MEAN GRADE EQUIVALENT SCORES,
1993-94 NEWCOMERS VS. COMPARISON GROUP AND DISTRICT

Subjects	Title VII Newcomers		Comparison Students		All AISD Students	
	N	GE	N	GE	N	GE
READING						
Grade						
9	5	3.3	90	4.7	4,177	9.3
10	4	3.5	43	5.7	2,967	11.8
11	3	4.9	32	6.5	2,320	12.8
MATHEMATICS						
Grade						
9	5	7.1	92	6.9	4,230	10.6
10	4	5.8	44	8.8	2,988	12.5
11	3	9.1	32	9.6	2,350	13.4
LANGUAGE						
Grade						
9	5	5.6	90	6.8	4,177	11.0
10	4	4.7	43	6.4	2,977	12.6
11	3	5.8	32	8.4	2,309	13.5
SOCIAL STUDIES						
Grade						
9	5	5.1	91	5.6	4,135	10.5
10	5	6.0	42	6.7	2,927	12.6
11	3	10.4	32	8.3	2,271	13.3
SCIENCE						
Grade						
9	5	4.8	91	6.8	4,144	10.6
10	5	7.1	42	7.3	2,933	12.6
11	3	10.9	32	9.2	2,265	13.4

OTHER MEASURES OF SCHOOL SUCCESS

One way to evaluate whether students in the District are succeeding in their education is to look at indices like attendance, dropout rate, grade point average, etc. ORE has designed a special set of computer programs called the **GE**Neric **E**valuation **SY**Stem (GENESYS) to gather outcome information from centrally maintained computer files on programs of interest. The results from GENESYS were used for most of the following analyses.

Dropouts

> At the high school level, the Title VII dropout rate was higher than that of the comparison group. However, fewer newcomers dropped out than was predicted from their risk factors, indicating the success of the program in dropout prevention.

The problem of school dropouts is a tremendous concern nationwide. As a group, the newcomers are at greater risk than the general student population because they exhibit more of the characteristics associated with the population that tends to drop out of high school. The Title VII Newcomers Program provides a supportive environment that makes a concerted effort to enhance the students' academic skills with the purpose of keeping them in school. **The predicted rate for the newcomers was higher than the obtained dropout rate, meaning that the program did better than anticipated in keeping students in school.** *For the past four years, the newcomers have consistently been retained in school (kept from dropping out) at rates higher than predicted.*

Figure 13 shows dropout rates (through the fifth six-weeks period of the 1993-94, 1992-93, 1992-91, and 1990-91 school years) for the Title VII newcomers and other similar LEP high school students.

FIGURE 13
TITLE VII NEWCOMERS VS. COMPARISON GROUPS,
PREDICTED AND OBTAINED DROPOUT RATES,
1993-94 COMPARED WITH THE PREVIOUS THREE YEARS

YEAR	GROUP	N	DROPOUT RATES	
			PREDICTED RATE*	OBTAINED RATE
1993-94	Title VII Newcomers	120	17.1%	9.2%
	Comparison Group	390	12.2%	0.3%
1992-93	Title VII Newcomers	134	8.6%	4.5%
	Comparison Group	374	6.6%	0.0%
1991-92	Title VII Newcomers	104	9.1%	2.9%
	Comparison Group	362	5.8%	0.3%
1990-91	Title VII Newcomers	108	8.2%	1.9%
	Comparison Group	311	7.1%	3.9%

* The predicted rate is based on historically known percentages of students with the same risk characteristics who dropped out.

Credits Earned

Title VII newcomers earned academic credit at a slightly lower rate during the fall semester, and at the same rate during the spring semester, when compared with similar LEP students.

High school students must earn 2.5 to 3.0 credits per semester in order to meet graduation requirements. Some students earn no grade (NG) for a course because of incomplete or unexcused absences; these courses are sometimes credited at a later date.

In the 1993-94 school year, Title VII newcomers earned slightly fewer credits than needed for graduation during both fall and spring semesters. When compared to other LEP A and B students at AISD high schools, the newcomers earned slightly fewer credits during the fall semester, and at the same number during the spring semester.

Figure 14 shows the credits earned by newcomers and the comparison groups during the past four years of program operation. *Previous years' newcomers earned about the same and sometimes slightly less academic credit than the comparison students.*

FIGURE 14
TITLE VII NEWCOMERS VS. COMPARISON GROUPS,
CREDITS EARNED, 1993-94 COMPARED WITH THE PREVIOUS THREE YEARS

Year	Group	N	Credits Earned	N	Credits Earned
			Fall 1993		Spring 1994
1993-94	Title VII Newcomers	89	2.3	85	2.3
	Comparison Group	380	2.5	386	2.3
			Fall 1992		Spring 1993
1992-93	Title VII Newcomers	96	2.1	108	2.0
	Comparison Group	349	2.4	368	2.2
			Fall 1991		Spring 1992
1991-92	Title VII Newcomers	74	2.4	83	2.5
	Comparison Group	338	2.5	338	2.3
			Fall 1990		Spring 1991
1990-91	Title VII Newcomers	86	2.5	103	2.2
	Comparison Group	289	2.3	291	1.9

Grade Point Average

Title VII newcomers earned a higher grade point average during both fall and spring semesters, when compared to similar LEP students at the high school level.

Grades are assigned on a 100-point scale with 70 being the cutoff for passing. The average of all grades received is the student's grade point average (GPA). **Title VII newcomers had a higher grade point average during both the fall and spring semester than the comparison group.** The grades for both groups were in the C range (70-80).

Figure 15 shows the grade point average averages of the newcomers and comparison groups during the past four years. *With the exception of fall 1992, the newcomers have earned higher grade point averages each semester than the comparison students.*

FIGURE 15
TITLE VII NEWCOMERS VS. COMPARISON GROUPS,
GRADE POINT AVERAGE, 1993-94 COMPARED WITH THE PREVIOUS THREE YEARS

Year	Group	N	GPA	N	GPA
			Fall 1993		**Spring 1994**
1993-94	Title VII Newcomers	84	77.9	85	76.3
	Comparison Group	378	77.1	384	75.5
			Fall 1992		**Spring 1993**
1992-93	Title VII Newcomers	95	76.8	101	78.6
	Comparison Group	346	78.5	357	76.1
			Fall 1991		**Spring 1992**
1991-92	Title VII Newcomers	74	82.3	82	83.1
	Comparison Group	335	80.3	335	80.1
			Fall 1990		**Spring 1991**
1990-91	Title VII Newcomers	86	82.7	103	80.2
	Comparison Group	289	78.5	286	76.5

Attendance

The Title VII newcomers had a lower attendance rate during both the fall and spring semesters than similar LEP students in the District. Newcomers attended classes at a higher rate than high school students districtwide during the fall semester, and at a lower rate during the spring semester.

Attendance rates were examined to see if Title VII newcomers were present for more classes than similar LEP students in the District. **The students in the comparison group attended classes at a higher rate during both fall and spring semesters. The attendance rate for the newcomers decreased in the spring semester.**

When the attendance rate for the newcomers was compared with the attendance rate for high schools at the district level, the rate for the newcomers was slightly higher during the fall semester, and lower during the spring semester.

Figure 16 shows the history of the attendance rates of newcomers, the comparison groups, and students districtwide. *With the exception of the slight difference during the fall 1992 and 1991 semesters, and the decrease in attendance rates during the 1993-94 school year from previous years; the newcomers have had consistently higher attendance rates than the comparison groups and students districtwide.*

FIGURE 16
TITLE VII NEWCOMERS VS. COMPARISON GROUPS AND DISTRICT, ATTENDANCE RATES, 1993-94 COMPARED WITH THE PREVIOUS THREE YEARS

Year	Group	N	Attendance %	N	Attendance %
			Fall 1993		**Spring 1994**
1993-94	Title VII Newcomers	99	90.9	106	86.8
	Comparison Group	382	92.4	389	88.4
	District	17,144	90.4	15,999	88.8
			Fall 1992		**Spring 1993**
1992-93	Title VII Newcomers	106	93.9	111	93.2
	Comparison Group	361	94.2	325	89.5
	District	17,030	91.7	15,625	89.5
			Fall 1991		**Spring 1992**
1991-92	Title VII Newcomers	80	95.1	98	94.7
	Comparison Group	339	95.3	361	93.5
	District	16,119	92.5	14,590	91.1
			Fall 1990		**Spring 1991**
1990-91	Title VII Newcomers	90	95.4	106	92.4
	Comparison Group	290	92.8	311	89.9
	District	14,482	93.5	14,755	90.5

Retention in Grade

In 1993-94, Title VII newcomers were recommended for retention in grade at a lower rate than the comparison group and the District. In previous year the retention rates for the newcomers had always been higher than the rates for the comparison group and the District.

ORE has found that grade retention is not beneficial to most students' long-term achievement and is associated with a high dropout risk (Wilkinson & Ligon, 1992). Studies indicate that low achievers who were promoted made greater gains, in the long run, than low achievers who were retained. The District has used this grade retention information to focus on the implications of student retention and to reduce retention rates. **In 1993-94, Title VII newcomers were recommended for retention in grade at a lower rate than the comparison group.** *Both newcomers and the comparison group of LEP students were recommended for retention at a lower rate than other students in the District (see Figure 17).*

FIGURE 17
TITLE VII NEWCOMERS VS. COMPARISON GROUPS AND DISTRICT
RETENTION IN GRADE RATES, 1993-94 COMPARED WITH THE PREVIOUS THREE YEARS

YEAR	TITLE VII NEWCOMERS	COMPARISON GROUP	DISTRICT
1993-94	5.0%	7.7%	9.2%
1992-93	18.7%	15.8%	8.0%
1991-92	15.4%	9.1%	5.3%
1990-91	38.9%	37.0%	20.8%

Graduation Rate

Because there were no 12th-grade Title VII newcomers in 1993-94, the graduation rate will not be discussed. The graduation rate of former Title VII newcomers is discussed in the section of this report titled "Current Status of Former Students."

ORIENTATION TO THE UNITED STATES

The Title VII newcomers were provided with a variety of activities designed to familiarize them with the culture of the United States. Most of the activities were in the form of reading selections, classroom discussions, and small group sessions. Many cultural and adjustment issues were addressed on a daily basis as they presented themselves, for example:

- Appropriate behaviors for making requests,
- Encouraging cooperative working relationships,
- Handling money, the use of checkbooks, reading bank statements, and
- Completing credit applications.

All three high schools presented units on cultural activities detailing traditional American holidays, and the newcomers were encouraged to share and celebrate traditions and customs notable in their countries.

One teacher used the ESL Teacher's Holiday Activities Kit as a resource for cultural planning. The students kept journals where they were encouraged to record their customs and compare the "new customs" after each cultural activity presentation. Some of the activities included vocabulary development, puzzles, pictures of food, songs, worksheets, and films.
One teacher invited the newcomers to her home for Thanksgiving dinner. The students were curious and enjoyed experimenting with the different foods. The teacher assistant was largely responsible for facilitating the transportation for the students to the teacher's home. Ten Vietnamese and two Hispanic students attended the Thanksgiving festivities. Many students took pictures and the teacher assistant recorded the dinner on videotape.
At another high school, the teacher used U.S.A.- A Cultural Reader and prepared thematic units that were used to provide instruction and to have students share experiences with their classmates.
At another school, the students saw videos during Black History month, and announcements through the school newspaper provided current information on news and school events.
On several occasions at each high school, not only did the students share food from their respective countries, but they also demonstrated how the food was prepared and consumed.
The students frequently organized and celebrated each others' birthdays, and one high school celebrated Teacher's Day because it was an important holiday in Mexico.
At another high school, most newcomers attended a program on graduation alternatives provided by the counselors. The program was intended for overage students with few credits, and the presentation included representatives from the local community college, the alternative high school, and a local learning center.

The students were provided with in-school group discussions by professionals from the community with expertise in areas relevant to the target population. The bilingual psychologist provided three sessions at each of the program sites, and worked with several students individually who were in need of special assistance. Frequently both current and former newcomers were in attendance. The students always had the option to participate and attend. Two newcomers were used as models for a city-wide poster that provided information for adolescents on availability of health services through the city program.

See Figure 18 for details on topics for discussions and presenters.

FIGURE 18
IN-SCHOOL LECTURES AND DISCUSSIONS,
1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS PROGRAM

TOPIC	PRESENTER	LOCATION
♦ Cultural conflicts ♦ Family relationships ♦ Gang violence ♦ Human sexuality ♦ Goal setting ♦ Career education and information	Bilingual Psychologist	Three High Schools
♦ School adjustment ♦ Cultural issues ♦ Strategies for adapting to the American culture at school	Vietnamese Specialist	One High School
♦ Human sexuality ♦ Issues concerning health care ♦ At-risk behaviors and potential consequences	Medical Doctor	One High School
♦ Current work and training opportunities during the summer	Recruiter in Job Placement Agency	One High School

The students were given an evaluation form at the end of each session in an effort to collect some of their impressions of the presentations, to gather their suggestions for future topics and ways to improve the discussions. Topics suggested by students for future discussions included, but were not limited to:

- Family themes--relationships, communication strategies, child abandonment;
- Personal themes--self-confidence, timidity, rejection, success in school;
- Global themes--racism, economic concerns, issues affecting Latinos in the U.S.;
- Sexual themes--abortion, pregnancy, sex roles, birth control, sexually transmitted diseases; and
- School themes - study habits, college opportunities, drop out prevention, interacting with teachers.

The group discussions provided an environment that was safe for students to express their concerns, and to interact with each other in the presence of a professional. In previous program years some of the in-school group discussions had been open for parents to attend, this was not the case during the 1993-94 school year. The students mentioned in their evaluations that the information addressed would have been beneficial to their parents.

See Figure 19 for a sample of comments from the student evaluations.

FIGURE 19
STUDENT COMMENTS FROM CULTURAL ORIENTATION DISCUSSIONS
1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS PROGRAM

"Our discussion was very good and I would like for it to continue because as we spoke other topics surfaced. I would like for these discussions to be more frequent because even though there was trust [established], I believe we need to relate better."

"I liked that we spoke of what is of interest to us as youth and the danger that we currently face. Also [an activity like this one] gives us enthusiasm and encouragement to continue studying. Yes, I have a suggestion - talk to the students first and then to the parents to see what their opinions are."

"I liked our conversation because it helped us to think about our experiences and to be more trusting of our parents, and ourselves in different situations."

"The speaker has talked to us about the problems in American society, problems that we have never heard of. We hope he will eventually show us the right way to live in this society."

"This activity is very good because it teaches us young people to reflect."

"I like his presentation about life in America. He will help us understand more about America and how to get through high school quickly. I would welcome him back to tell us more about family life the American way. I suggest the speaker comes back to the high school because I have many questions to ask him."

"I think these are topics we should discuss more frequently because they are very important to better one's life. One should listen to the advice of such speakers in order that we may know what is correct in life. I would like these topics to be discussed with our parents and siblings so that we can gain more confidence."

"Everything was very interesting, I liked the topic and her explanation, and how she makes us feel comfortable. I suggest we bring our parents so they can talk with her, and see if we can make something for our community."

"I like the way the speaker makes us participate, the way she talks to us, and how she helps us understand the topic."

"This topic [being a good student] is interesting to me because I want to be a good student."

"What I liked the best were the comments shared by the students. I would like to discuss the topic of gangs, I think that would be very interesting."

"I hope he will be back to tell us more about life in the U.S. and what we should not do in the U.S. He will guide us in dealing with life in the U.S. He will help us become good citizens."

"I learned a lot and liked this activity very much. I would like to have more discussions and for us to be supportive of each other."

EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHER ASSISTANTS

From the programmatic standpoint, it is evident that the teacher assistants perform many functions, and that their role is central to the program.

As in the previous three years, one of the main questions for the evaluation has to do with the impact of the teacher assistant on the newcomers (see "Evaluation Overview"). The question continues to be very important because federally funded teacher assistants, in tandem with locally provided ESL teachers, constitute the central instructional intervention in the Title VII Newcomers Program. In view of the necessity for the District to consider whether to continue the same configuration of services with local funds after the fifth and final year (school year 1994-95), when federal funds expire, the role or the teacher assistant in the instructional team was the focus of some inquiry. *Because too few newcomers take standardized achievement tests, and because evaluation resources were limited, a statistical analysis of the impact of the teacher assistants on student achievement could not be undertaken.* However, information obtained from all of the key participants in the program provides a good perspective on the role of the teacher assistant in the program.

During four years of program implementation, the Title VII Newcomers Program has retained three of the ESL teachers for four years, and one ESL teacher for two years. There has been more mobility among the teacher assistants. In the 1993-94 school year, two new teacher assistants were hired and one continued from the previous year. The continuity and experience among the staff provides the program with stability and consistency in the areas of instruction and services to immigrant students. Two of the teacher assistants have college degrees, they all work as part of a team, and therefore are under continual supervision from the ESL teacher. Most of them have had considerable training in issues pertaining to second language acquisition. During the past four years, the role of the teacher assistant has been evolving and becoming better defined.

The primary task of the teacher/teacher assistant team is to provide ESL instruction to the newcomers. The teacher assistant helps the teacher with many classroom tasks and works with the students in addressing some of the special issues affecting immigrant students. In addition to their many responsibilities, the teacher assistants conducted interviews with former newcomers in an effort to provide additional services and/or information, and they continued to develop linkages with other school personnel involved with former newcomers. The teachers and teacher assistants viewed the role of the teacher assistants in a very similar manner. When teachers and teacher assistants were interviewed for the end-of-the-year final report, they identified the following activities as the primary duties of the teacher assistants:

- To assist the ESL teachers in planning, teaching, and managing classroom activities,
- To administer the LAB tests;
- To help newcomers become familiar with the American school system;
- To provide support for the ESL teacher in addressing the many needs of immigrant students;
- To translate for students in their content area classes;
- To substitute for the ESL teacher;
- To establish and maintain linkages with other school personnel, (e.g., teachers, counselors, nurses coaches, and administrators);
- To establish rapport with parents and maintain phone contact;
- To be the second member of the teaching team;
- To provide the necessary intervention if a discipline problem occurs;
- To teach small groups of students on any assignments given by the teachers;
- To facilitate the use of the computers for the students, select appropriate programs, and assist newcomers in becoming more independent in their use of the computers;
- To provide one-to-one nonacademic counseling and be present as a resource person to students;

- To provide administrative (scheduling, immunization record keeping) and clerical (record grades, copy materials) support for the teachers and students; and
- To follow up former newcomers and be a resource person for them.

The list is not all-inclusive, but it delineates the primary duties of the teacher assistants from the perspective of both ESL teachers and teacher assistants. The bilingual coordinators concur with the list of responsibilities for the teacher assistant. The following comments are from the teacher interviews, describing the impact of the teacher assistants in the Title VII classroom:

- "I could not do without the teacher assistant - we are total partners. She has great rapport with students, and is very helpful to students both socially and academically. A group of students has been assigned to her for instructional purposes."

- "This is the first year I have had a teacher assistant for two consecutive years and I have experienced greater program continuity. She became the teacher for the newcomers in my absence, she prepared the lesson and provided the instruction, maintained discipline in the classroom, and kept students on task. She dealt with a difficult discipline problem in an appropriate manner, commanding the students' respect and sustaining communication."

- "Our teacher assistant is wonderful. He is indispensable and has improved our program immensely. He contacts parents for us, translates, explains, and helps the students. He is also our resident computer expert."

A list of duties for the teacher assistants was given to the newcomers in the student survey. They were asked to mark the ways in which they were helped by the teacher assistants. The following items (see Figure 20) were checked off with the greatest frequency.

FIGURE 20
STUDENT OPINION OF TEACHER ASSISTANT DUTIES,
1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS PROGRAM

ITEM	PERCENT RESPONDING
Helped me practice English through conversation	79%
Assisted in using the computer	73%
Translated for me with other teachers	73%
Worked with small groups of students	68%
Helped with preparing school schedules	58%

As in previous years, the teacher assistants helped with academic preparation, planned carefully, and worked directly under the supervision of the ESL teacher, and in doing so afforded the ESL teacher more instructional time with the newcomers. The teacher assistants also provided the necessary follow-up to instruction, assisted with small cooperative group activities, collected information concerning students, and provided follow-up services for both current and former newcomers. *The teachers have been very consistent during the past four years in indicating that without the ongoing support of the teacher assistants, their work would be more difficult. According to the teachers, the duties performed by the teacher assistants were essential and complementary to the instruction they were providing.*

COSTS

The cost for providing services to the newcomers was $940 per student above the regular District per pupil allocation, and $1.34 per contact hour for the 1993-94 school year. Newcomers received varying amounts of service because of their high degree of mobility.

Students in the Title VII Newcomers Program received varying amounts of service, primarily because of the high degree of mobility in the immigrant population. During the 1993-94 school year, the program served 120 students. A total of 35 students withdrew during the fall and spring semesters, 23 newcomers entered the program in the spring semester, and 26 students were mainstreamed in January 1994.

See Figure 21 for details on the mobility of the newcomer population .

FIGURE 21
MOBILITY OF THE 1993-94 NEWCOMERS POPULATION

SCHOOL	FALL 1993 # OF STUDENTS ENTERED	SPRING 1994 # OF STUDENTS ENTERED	FALL 1993 WITHDRAWALS	SPRING 1994 WITHDRAWALS	STUDENTS MAINSTREAMED IN JANUARY 1994
Austin	34	6	6	9	9
Lanier	35	6	1	10	16
Reagan	28	11	3	6	1
Total	97	23	10	25	26

When a student withdraws from AISD a reason for that withdrawal is recorded in the Student Master File. Figure 22 displays the withdrawal reasons given by the newcomers.

FIGURE 22
WITHDRAWAL REASONS OF 1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS

REASON	FALL 1993	SPRING 1994
Moving out of town	5	12
Nonattendance	4	4
Did not re-register	0	3
Excessive absences dropped by Data Services	1	2
Transfer within the District	0	1
Going to work	0	1
Attend Austin Community College	0	1
Unknown	0	1
TOTAL	10	25

The cost per student was calculated in two ways. The first calculation was made by dividing the total number of students served by the total cost of the program. This calculation resulted in a cost of $940 per student for the 1993-94 academic year.

$112,770 (budget) / 120 (# of students) = $940

In the second calculation, the entry and exit days for each student were examined with the purpose of determining how many days a student had been in attendance. Once the days of attendance had been established, the number of contact hours could be ascertained. Based on the days of attendance it was calculated that there had been 84,102 contact hours during the school year. Dividing the budget ($112,770) by the total number of contact hours resulted in a cost of $1.34 per contact hour.

$112,770 (budget) / 84,102 (# of contact hours) = $1.38

Both cost per student and per student contact hour were the same in 1993-94 as in 1992-93 because although the program budget decreased, the number of students served also decreased.

SERVICES

TRAINING PROVIDED TO TEACHERS AND TEACHER ASSISTANTS

The Title VII Program provided an orientation session and teacher workshops for the four program teachers and three teacher assistants. The feedback from the staff indicated the workshops were very helpful, informative, and educational, and provided an opportunity for them to share and exchange ideas.

The four teachers and three teacher assistants were provided with four workshops during the 1993 fall semester and two workshops during the 1994 spring semester. All the program teachers and teacher assistants attended the training sessions. The workshops were held at the three high schools, the December meeting was held at a local restaurant, and a full-day workshop on cooperative learning took place at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. The format of the workshops included discussions, group activities, presentations, and demonstrations.

See Figure 23 for a brief description of the agenda topics at the training sessions.

FIGURE 23
MONTHLY AGENDA TOPICS FOR STAFF MEETINGS,
1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS PROGRAM

MONTHLY MEETING	AGENDA TOPICS
September 1993	Program management (program description, teacher and teacher assistant schedules, LAB testing of students, screening students and placement, communication with content area teachers, faculty presentation and budget); instructional issues (performance/product assessments, publishing students' work, cooperative learning, decision making/peer counseling, and cultural resources in the community).
October 1993	Instructional issues (creating Newcomers Notebooks, sharing instructional ideas, disseminating articles on cooperative learning, developing curriculum, and creating ESL portfolios).
November 1993	Program management (discussion of Title VII Newcomers 1992-93 Final Report, procedure for Student Intake Forms, importance of LAB scores for newcomers exiting in January 1994, and student surveys); instructional issues (review of teacher suggestions from final report, and group activity on how to use the Newcomers Newsletter to increase awareness among high school staff and faculty).
December 1993	Program management (discussion of 1993-94 evaluation plan, review of the added responsibilities for teacher assistant, and establishing a tentative timeline for follow-up work with former newcomers).
February 1994	Program management (discussion of demographic characteristics of the newcomers, necessary follow-up activities on newcomers not in the LEP File, interviews with former newcomers, and budget expenditures).
May 1994	Instructional issue (all day workshop on cooperative learning strategies at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory).

As in all the previous years of the Title VII Program, the staff development workshops were very helpful and informative. The sessions provided the staff with a working group with whom ideas could be exchanged, issues discussed, and concerns expressed.

The teachers and teacher assistants received a stipend for their attendance at the workshops.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEACHERS AND TEACHER ASSISTANTS

A teacher utilized a portion of the Title VII monies available to advance her teaching credentials.

As in previous years, college tuition funds were available in 1993-94 for program staff to continue with academic courses that would strengthen their credentials as ESL teachers. At this time, one teacher is continuing her graduate studies in linguistics, and she completed 12 academic hours during the past school year. The remaining ESL teachers have completed all the required endorsements (one with past support from Title VII funds). Among the teacher assistants, none was able to attend college this past year, but two indicated they were considering academic work during the program's final year, even though tuition monies will be limited.

OUTREACH TO PARENTS

As in the past three years, the parents of Title VII newcomers were provided with a variety of activities designed to orient them to the school district's expectations of their children and to offer them relevant information and support.

During the 1993-94 school year, there were several kinds of outreach efforts made to the parents of the Title VII newcomers, and these were met with a good response. At the beginning of the 1993 fall semester, all three high schools had a Back-to-School Night. The activities at Back-to-School Night included a presentation by the principal, a general discussion on school topics like discipline, handouts on curriculum and school resources, dissemination of the Student Handbook, and visits to the classrooms. During the visits to the newcomers' classrooms, goals and services of the Title VII Newcomers Program were initially discussed with parents. The parents attended choir concerts, special school activities in which newcomers were recognized, and contributed food for special events, for example, a 5 de mayo festivity. Parents were also contacted on the telephone, primarily because it was more convenient, because most parents work and have many responsibilities. The teacher assistants contacted parents when there were problems with student attendance, discipline issues, inappropriate use of language, medical difficulties, and areas concerning cultural awareness. *It was the opinion of the teacher assistants that the parents of the newcomers were supportive of all the efforts made by the high school, and that they would talk to their children about "settling down" and being cooperative.* The teacher assistants' knowledge of the newcomers' first language facilitated their contact with the parents, and they frequently became the liaison between the parent and the school. The District continued with its activities for bilingual parents fliers were usually posted at the campuses, and given to students to take home to their parents.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

SUMMARY OF STUDENT SURVEYS

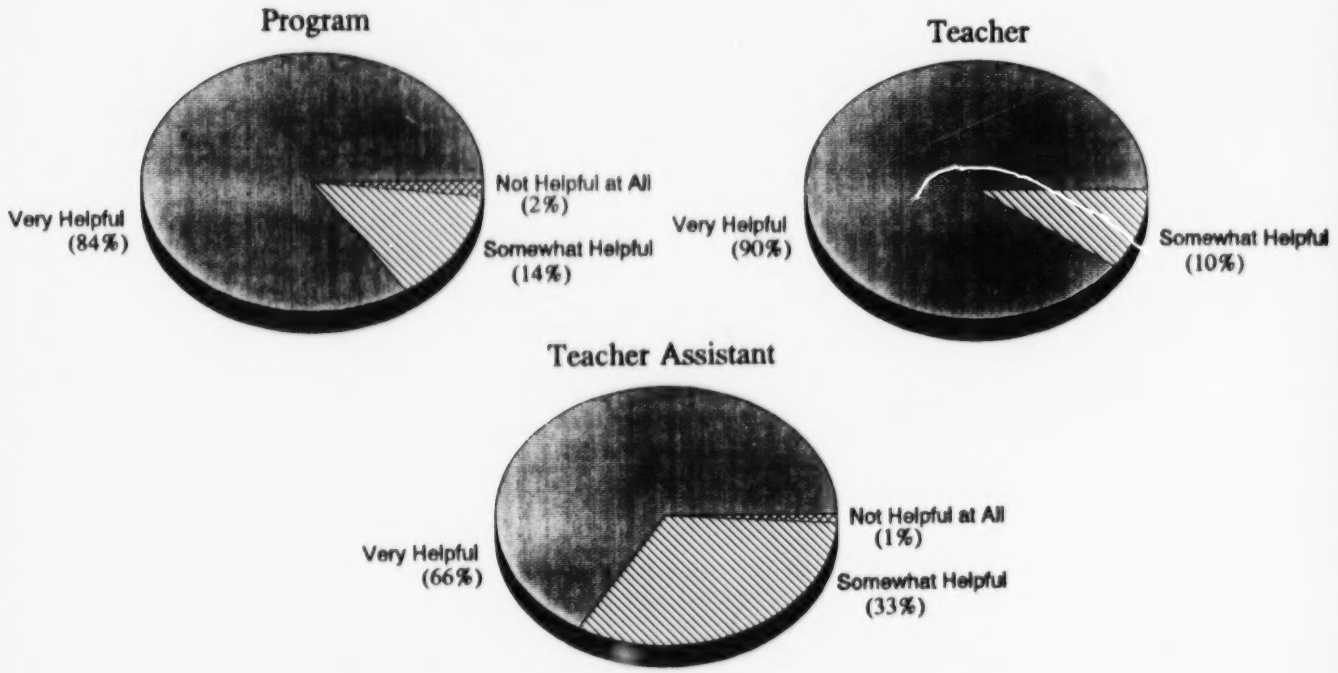
Like their predecessors, the newcomers believed that their overall experience with the Title VII Program was very helpful as they acquired English skills, learned to use computers, felt welcome in their schools, and felt confident about staying in school.

In December 1993 and April 1994, the students in the Title VII Newcomers Program were asked to complete a survey as a classroom activity. The teachers and their assistants administered the surveys and were available to assist the students with any questions. The surveys were available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese versions, and the students could choose whichever language was most comfortable for them. Surveys were sent out to the schools in December 1993 for students who had either completed their two semesters or were ready for a regular ESL classroom environment for completion. Of the 26 newcomers exiting the program in January 1994, 21 (81%) returned their surveys. Of the 70 newcomers available in spring 1994, 59 (84%) were in attendance to complete the survey on the day it was administered. A total of 80 surveys was completed by newcomers.

In the opinion of two thirds or more of the students, the program, teachers, and teacher assistants were very helpful. *Compared to the 1992-93 school year, there was an increase of 19 percentage points in the newcomers' selection of "very helpful" for program, 14 percentage points in their selection of "very helpful" for teacher, and a slight decrease of 1 percentage point in the "very helpful" selection for teacher assistant* (see Figure 24).

FIGURE 24
HELPFULNESS OF 1993-94 TITLE VII
NEWCOMERS PROGRAM, TEACHERS, AND TEACHER ASSISTANTS

N = 80



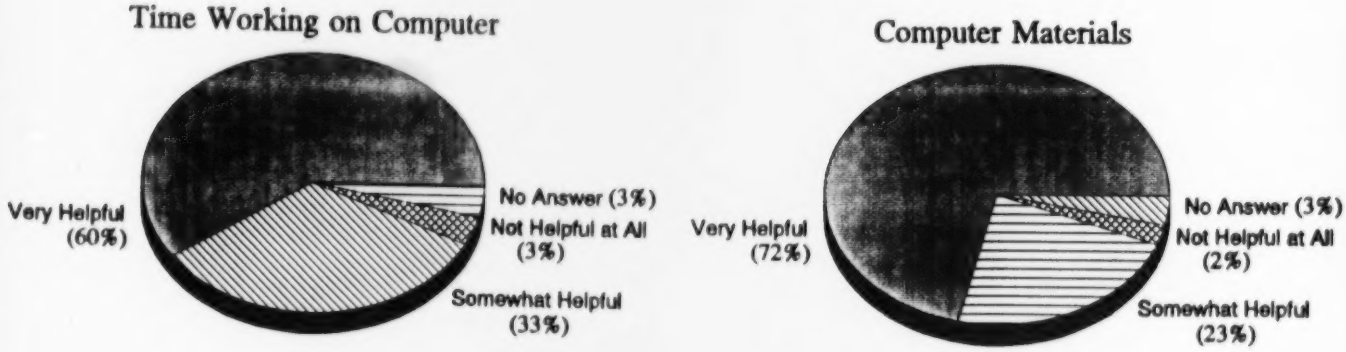
During its fourth year, the Title VII Newcomers Program continued to retain as critical components in its design the following:

- The time spent working on the computers and computer materials,
- The opportunity to study and practice English in three-hour blocks, and
- Studying and learning in small groups.

A majority of the students reported that both time working on the computer (60%) and the computer materials (72%) had been very helpful. *Compared to the 1992-93 school year, there was an increase of 9 percentage points in the "very helpful" category for time working on the computers, and 19 percentage points in the "very helpful" category for use of the computer materials* (see Figure 25).

FIGURE 25
HELPFULNESS OF 1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS PROGRAM, TIME SPENT WORKING ON COMPUTERS, AND COMPUTER MATERIALS

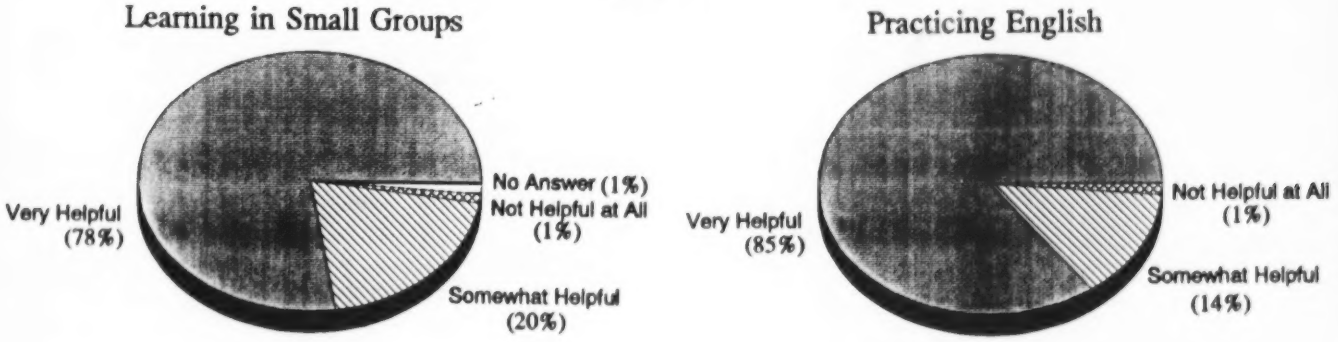
N=80



Cooperative learning strategies were utilized by having students work in small groups to encourage dialogue among them, to have students solve problems as a group, and to provide assistance and support to each other. *Compared to the 1992-93 school year, there was an increase of 14 percentage points in learning in small groups, and 6 percentage points in practicing English three hours daily* (see Figure 26).

FIGURE 26
1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS PROGRAM,
HELPFULNESS OF LEARNING IN SMALL GROUPS AND
PRACTICING ENGLISH THREE HOURS DAILY

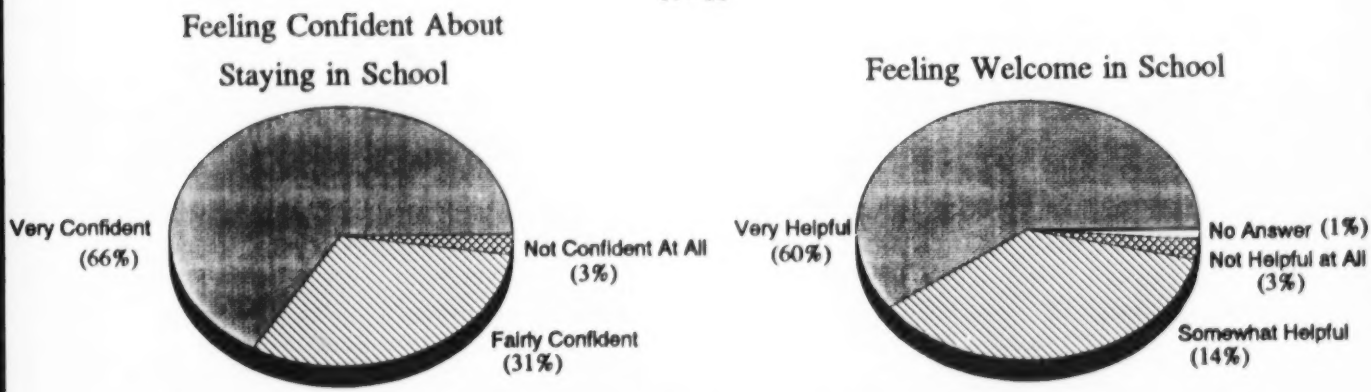
N=80



Feeling welcome and gaining confidence to remain in school were viewed as two areas that could provide reassurance for students and assist them in completing their high school curriculum. Like the 1992-93 newcomers (87%), *the 1993-94 newcomers (96%) felt "very" or "fairly welcome" in their school environment*. In regard to feeling confident about staying in school, there is an increase of 4 percentage points in feeling "very confident" and a decrease of 1 percentage point in feeling "fairly confident" when compared to third-year students (see Figure 27).

FIGURE 27
1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS PROGRAM,
FEELING WELCOME IN SCHOOL AND
FEELING CONFIDENT AS A RESULT OF THE PROGRAM

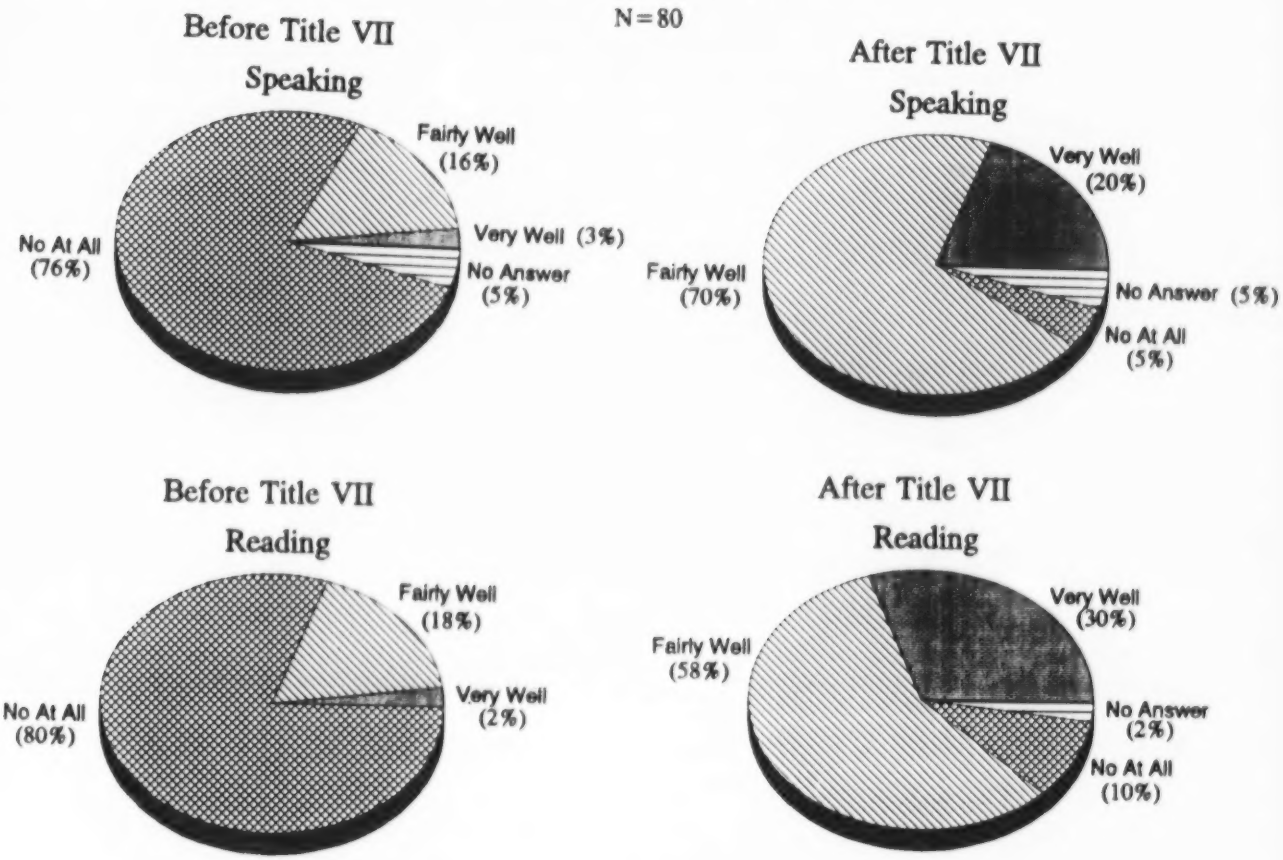
N=80



The newcomers were asked to rate their abilities to read and speak English before and after their participation in the program. *In their opinion, there had been a significant improvement in speaking and reading English*. The students rated their skills on a scale ranging from "very well," to "fairly well," to "not

at all." *After their participation in Title VII, most students (88%) indicated that they read either "very well," or "fairly well"; 90% of the students indicated that they spoke English "very well" or "fairly well."* Compared to 1992-93, there was an increase of 6 percentage points in reading, and 12 percentage points in speaking in students' self-ratings (see Figure 28).

FIGURE 28
1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS PROGRAM,
READING AND SPEAKING ENGLISH
BEFORE AND AFTER PARTICIPATION



In summary, the newcomers found the program to be very helpful not only academically but also as they made the transition to a different language and culture. The teachers and teacher assistants provided classroom experiences that encouraged the students to learn and fostered the development of self-assurance. The combination of experiencing academic and personal success in a foreign country and educational setting provided the newcomers with the impetus to continue with their studies.

SUMMARY OF STAFF SURVEYS

The overall consensus of the project staff during the fourth year of Title VII is that the program continues to be necessary and helpful. The program continues to provide students with the opportunity to acquire English language skills in a sheltered environment.

In order to elicit opinions, ideas, concerns, and suggestions, a survey was administered in April 1994 to principals and LPAC chair who participated in the Title VII Newcomers Program. All six principals and LPAC chair. Two principals and two LPAC chair have been working with the Title VII Newcomers Program for four years; one principal and one LPAC chair have worked for one year with the program.

Administrators

After four years of program implementation, the administrators regarded the program as an:

- "Opportunity for monolingual secondary students to receive intensive assistance in language development and acquisition in order to assimilate more rapidly into the main curriculum."
- "Environment [that was] safe and warm for students [where] they were made to feel as a part of the program and then a part of the school. [The students] enjoyed the program."
- "Intensive language program that provided support for students and assimilated them into the regular school program."

Positive Findings According to Program Staff

The following list from the staff survey includes most of the program activities that in the opinion of the staff worked well:

- The rapid English/American immersion of immigrant students, and the student retention in the Newcomers Program [through] ESOL;
- The coordination with ORE and the Bilingual Program at central office, and the school administrator's trust in the expertise and judgment of the program staff;
- The identification of students as newcomers helped regular teachers extend extra assistance to immigrant students;
- The ESOL reading and English classes, and two periods of instruction;
- The position of the teacher assistant paid by the grant and the hiring of a person who speaks the language of the students;
- The implementation of block scheduling for more time on task and integrated curriculum for more relevant instruction;
- The additional position for a teacher funded through the Bilingual Education Program to accommodate the [increasing] number of students;

- The linkages with teachers, administrators, and counselors through the years have allowed for them to find ways to collaborate with program staff;
- The addition of a Native Speakers' Spanish class to help the newcomers improve and retain their primary language; and
- The participation of newcomers in the school choir.

Program Components in Need of Improvement According to Program Staff

Among the activities mentioned as not having worked well and/or in need of improvement were the following:

- The coordination of scheduling with other classes;
- The coordination by counselors and administrators with the middle schools that refer newcomers;
- Students may not be learning English as quickly as possible;
- Better training in the use of technology to enhance individualized instruction; and
- Two teacher assistants to better serve the primary language groups [Spanish and Vietnamese] on campus.

Staff Suggestions for Newcomer Program Improvement and for Improving the Retention Rate of Former Newcomers During its Final Year

- [The program needs a] technology consultant and trainer.
- The program needs to continue for as long as possible since it works so well at [our] high school.
- Software for TAAS preparation should be made available to the English Language Writing Labs.
- Better coordination among school staff would enhance the program.
- Provide some training on the Title VII Newcomers Program to new school personnel who is directly involved with the program.
- A staff person could be assigned to follow up the newcomers, like in the Migrant Program, because many newcomers do not live with their parents and need social, economic assistance as well educational assistance.
- The [program and/or school] could provide counseling and support for students and their families.
- Additional ESL training for faculty would be helpful.
- Explore employment alternatives for newcomers, and the implications of their legal status on employment opportunities.

- Invite former newcomers to talk with students about their experiences beyond high school.
- Form a problem-solving [group consisting of] teachers, counselors, and LPAC members and explore the issue of program continuity.
- Continue with the two-period classes (block schedule) beyond the 1994-95 school year because students can concentrate on four subjects.
- Retain the Vietnamese teacher assistant because the need for a translator is essential for the students and staff.
- Explore alternative sources of funding for the teacher assistant position because the Title VII Program is in its last year of implementation.
- The LPACs can utilize the 1994-95 school year to plan and reassess their role with immigrant students when the Title VII monies are terminated.

END-OF-THE-YEAR INTERVIEWS WITH TEACHERS, TEACHER ASSISTANTS, AND PROGRAM COORDINATOR

The end-of-the-year interviews with program teachers and teacher assistants were conducted in an effort to gather specific information for each campus because each high school functions differently from the others. For instance, the scheduling of ESL instruction in one site is in a three-hour block with the same teacher; in another school, two hours of instruction are provided by one teacher and the last hour by another teacher; and in the third site two hours of instruction are provided during the morning and the last hour of instruction during the afternoon. Each high school incorporates into the overall schedule of the high school a schedule that fulfills the program's requirements and at the same time offers the newcomers classes in which they are likely to succeed. The program coordinator has been with the Title VII Newcomers Program since its inception, consequently her observations are from someone who has seen the evolution of the program.

Alternative Testing Methods

All of the schools used alternative testing methods. Two teachers indicated that because skills levels were so varied among the newcomers, they used observation methods and graded students according to ability levels. All the teacher assistants frequently went to classes with newcomers, and often translated tests for students in order to increase their opportunity to make better/passing grades. Translations facilitated students' test performance and reflected their knowledge, not their language limitations. Students were given oral tests to practice English and demonstrate language proficiency in particular dialogue situations. Newcomers wrote essays, read, and listened to specific reading selections to practice both skills. Students had the opportunity to take paper and pencil multiple-choice tests to become acquainted with more traditional testing methods. Some teachers used videotapes, plays, presentations, and group discussions for the assessment of students' progress. By using some of these strategies, the students had the opportunity to use their new language in an authentic manner. The purpose of all testing was for assessment, and instructional grouping and guidance.

New Computer Equipment and Software Purchased

All of the new equipment that was bought was additive and complementary to what had been purchased in previous years. The Packard Bell computers were upgraded with video capture cards and the IBM computers were enhanced by adding memory capacity. With upgraded computers, the students had greater opportunities to work with word processing and to create data banks. At one high school the equipment purchased permitted the use of interactive software. An Intel Smart Video recorder was purchased along with software such as PFS Writing, Lotus Ami Pro, Norton Desktop Publishing, and others. Some of the software included a TAAS Tutor that assisted current and former newcomers in their preparation for the exit-level test, Milken Sentence Combining, Operation Neptune, Window Write, Skills Bank, Print Shop, other word processing programs, and different types of games.

Classroom Use of Computers

All of the teachers reported using the computers more extensively than in previous years. The better use of the computer could probably be attributed to the greater familiarity of the teachers and teacher assistants with the technology. During 1993-94, a computer trainer went to each program site on two separate occasions to assist program staff in assessing their hardware and software needs in order to determine the most efficient use of the money provided for equipment purchases. The newcomers became very comfortable using the computers within a few weeks of their introduction. In one classroom site, the teacher assistant turned the computers on before school began; therefore, the students did not have to spend time with technical tasks until much later during the semester. In another high school, the newcomers used computers not only in the Title VII classroom but also in some of their other classes such as in an ESL writing lab and in mathematics.

Among other tasks performed on the computers, two program sites used the computers to produce newsletters that were distributed among students and school personnel. The newsletters permitted students to experiment with publishing concepts, gather information, conduct interviews, produce art work, write the articles, and prepare the layouts for publication. In producing the newsletters the students had to experiment with different computer options and select what was most appropriate. Students were able to work individually and collectively, and to practice English in an authentic manner.

- At one program site two newsletters were produced, one at the beginning and the other at the end of the school year. The newcomers used their first newsletter to share current programmatic and some historical information. The newsletter had pictures of all the newcomers organized in small groups with a brief write-up about each student. The ESL teacher included a list of viable instructional strategies for regular teachers teaching LEP students. The last newsletter covered students' academic accomplishments, former newcomers who were graduating, athletic contributions, and interviews with teachers who were very supportive of the Title VII Newcomers Program.

- Another high school produced a newsletter at the end of every six-weeks interval. The high school newsletters included samples of student interviews and surveys, descriptions of class projects, samples of students' stories about holidays in their home countries (e.g., Day of the Dead and Tet Trung Thu), poems, book reviews, student art work, and other examples of writing opportunities afforded to students.

- The students at one high school collaborated with each other, the teacher, the teacher assistant, and the principal to compose a Phrase Book that was done in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Questions were formulated around topics related to school subjects, e.g., counselor, library, lockers, schedules, office, attendance, and other issues. The most relevant questions were selected, translated, and put in book form. The Phrase Books were made available to the students who had a use for them.

Actual amount of time spent on the computer varied considerably from school to school. The variations can be attributed to the number of students versus the number of computers available, the type of instruction, as well as the degree of comfort with computerized instruction on the part of the program staff. The teachers used various methods to maintain a record of time spent on the computers by the students. Among the methods used were logs, seating charts, small groups of students, and rotation of students within groups. Students frequently answered each other's questions and learned from one another. Students would often use their lunch time to study or play on the computers. The computers were used primarily for instruction, but on occasion the newcomers were allowed to play games as a form of reward or to help them become more comfortable with the equipment.

Use of Cooperative Learning Activities

In the opinion of the bilingual program coordinator and the program staff, the use of cooperative learning activities had increased from the previous three years. Cooperative learning activities were taking hold as an effective teaching strategy. The teachers reported that the students enjoyed working in small groups, but initially they had to experience the processes that occur when a group was formed. The teachers had groups consisting of two, three, and four students depending on the task the newcomers were in the process of completing. At one site students constructed portfolios around topics like clothing, holidays, and meals with all of the appropriate language describing the items. Another high school used cooperative learning activities to allocate time on the computers. In the last high school, roles like leader and reporter were assigned, so students could develop the skills necessary for working in a group. The groups afforded students with the opportunities to ask questions, to complete tasks, to share work, and to practice their emerging language skills. Cooperative learning activities were used daily to some degree at all program sites. One school reported using this strategy less the second semester because more time had to be spent on TAAS preparation.

The bilingual program coordinator would like to see the following plans/ideas implemented during the final year of program operation:

- Develop the criteria necessary to retain the teacher assistant on campus, and identify possible funding sources;
- Establish a focus group consisting of Districtwide ESL teachers in middle and high schools to review curriculum and instructional issues;
- Identify strategies to serve LEP students in home campuses and thereby reduce transportation costs;
- Spend more time on teacher training, create a core list of instructional materials that the bilingual coordinators could review, and begin to purchase instructional materials incrementally; and
- Have bilingual coordinators work with campus leadership teams to establish assurances for ongoing instructional services for recently arrived immigrant students.

In summary, the staff concluded that the fourth year of the Title VII Newcomers Program was successful and addressed the needs of a very specific student population. During the fifth and final year of the program, planning for continuing instructional services for recently arriving immigrant students and serving former newcomers will be a focus for the program staff and the bilingual coordinators.

1993-94 NEWCOMER SUCCESS STORIES

One of the Title VII program goals is that students gain sufficient confidence to continue with their education and eventually graduate from high school. One way of encouraging students in the attainment of this important goal is by asking them to participate in extracurricular activities. In the process of becoming involved in school activities they meet other students, practice their newly acquired English skills, and experience the school culture. Involvement with school activities provides the newcomers with familiarity with their school environment and affords them a feeling of being welcome.

See Figure 29 for a partial sample list of the school activities in which the newcomers engage.

FIGURE 29
1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS PROGRAM,
NEWCOMER SUCCESS STORIES

In May 1994, six newcomers served as ushers at the District's ceremony in which Hispanic students were recognized for their achievement in academic pursuits, development of leadership skills, and for preservation of language and culture.
As in previous years, six newcomers from all program sites were recipients of the 1994 AISD Board of Trustee's scholarship; an academic scholarship which recognizes students by grades whose grade point averages (GPAs) fall in the top 10% of the class.
Two newcomers were selected as poster models for the City of Austin Health Department's campaign to prevent teenage pregnancy and the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases. the press release the students met the mayor and counsel members. Students were interviewed by the television media and were featured on the evening news.
Newcomers in one high school participated in the choir. Their teacher said, *"I had the pleasure of working with the newcomers this year. Their beautiful voices and bright faces touched my heart. Choir is a wonderful way to enrich their lives and it helps them with their English. We sang in various languages, and I especially enjoyed watching their growth in the English language."*
Newcomers have participated in the high school athletic programs. One high school coach said, *"In 1993-94, we were District, Bi-District, and Area Soccer Champions in the boys division and a lot of the success can be attributed to students who are or were part of the Newcomers Program. I feel that all of the students associated with the program benefit and develop a sense of community at our high school."*
The Austin Media Production group that is responsible selecting District exemplary programs chose one of the newcomer program sites for one of their productions. The release was available for a month, and was viewed throughout the District and the Austin community.
Five newcomers were the recipients of tuition scholarships from the local bilingual ESL budget for them to continue receiving ESL instruction during the summer school program.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FORMER NEWCOMERS (1990-91, 1991-92, 1992-93)

CURRENT STATUS OF FORMER NEWCOMERS

One of the goals of the Title VII Newcomers Program is to see that the students remain in school and ultimately graduate. To assess whether this goal is being met, longitudinal information was collected on three groups of former newcomer--students served in 1990-91, 1991-92, and 1992-93. Information was collected by utilizing the **GEN**eric **E**valuation **SY**S**tem** (GENESYS). GENESYS is a method of streamlining data collection and evaluation for a wide variety of projects; it collects and reports a great deal of information on the characteristics and outcomes of particular groups of students.

The District's computer files are maintained and updated on an ongoing basis, and certain information is retained for a limited period of time. With the first and second groups of newcomers, some information (e.g. grade level, attendance, ethnicity, number of credits, etc.) is no longer available for students who:

- Withdrew officially from school,
- Dropped out of school,
- Failed to re-register,
- Became overage, and/or
- Dropped automatically from the Student Master File after two years of non-attendance.

Some information is available for former students who completed or are in the process of finishing high school. See Figure 30 for the current status of each group of former newcomers for the 1993-94 school year.

FIGURE 30
CURRENT (1993-94) STATUS OF FORMER NEWCOMERS

INDICATOR	1990-91 NEWCOMERS	1991-92 NEWCOMERS	1992-93 NEWCOMERS
Original number of students	108	104	134
Students who graduated May and summer 1992	(9) [108-9=99]	N/A	N/A
Students who graduated May and summer of 1993	(8) [99-8=91]	(3) [104-3=101]	N/A
Students who did not re-register in 1993 fall semester	(59) [91-59=32]	(48) [101-48=53]	(31) [134-31=103]
Students who started 1993 fall semester	32	53	103
Officially dropped out during 1993-94 school year	7	8	18
Students who graduated May and summer of 1994	11	12	3
Number of students less graduates and official dropouts	(18) [32-18=14]	(20) [53-20=32]	(21) [103-21=82]
Total number of students at the end of the 1993-94 school year	**14**	**33**	**82**

Achievement

Since leaving the Newcomers Program, the newcomers' achievement on both the NAPT and the TAAS continues to be lower in most areas when compared to high school students in AISD. When compared to the AISD averages, the average percentage of 1990-91 former newcomers mastering the TAAS at the exit level was higher in mathematics. Former newcomers continue to score below the national average on the NAPT. Performance on standardized achievement tests has historically been difficult for some language minority students.

Other Measures of School Success

Other measures of school success can be viable indicators of students making the necessary adjustments to remain in school and continue to strive towards graduation. Figure 31 shows a comparison between AISD students and the 1990-91, 1991-92, and 1992-93 Title VII newcomers during the 1993-94 school on a variety of indicators.

FIGURE 31
1990-91, 1991-92, 1992-93 FORMER TITLE VII NEWCOMERS VS.
1993-94 AISD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

	1990-91 NEWCOMERS		1991-92 NEWCOMERS		1992-93 NEWCOMERS		AISD STUDENTS	
INDICATORS	Fall '93	Spring '94	Fall '93	Spring '94	Fall '93	Spring '94	Fall '93	Spring '94
Attendance	82.6%	85.3%	89.9%	92.1%	90.1%	89.6%	90.4%	88.8%
GPA	75.5%	77.4%	78.9%	82.3%	77.1%	76.7%	79.2%	79.3%
Retention*	X	0.0%	X	0.0%	X	0.0%	X	9.2%
Dropout Rate	X	6.5%	X	7.7%	X	13.4%	X	8.8%
Predicted Dropout Rate**	X	18.2%	X	14.0%	X	17.6%	X	8.8%
Obtained Dropout Rate ***	X	21.2%	X	15.1%	X	17.5%	X	7.9%

* Percent for the entire year.
** The percentage of program students predicted to drop out.
*** The percentage of students who actually dropped out; if this percentage is lower than what was predicted, the program did better than anticipated.
X = Rates are for spring semester only.

Graduation

Students coming to the United States from foreign countries must make many adjustments in order to function in American schools. Oftentimes the transcripts they bring with them are difficult to interpret because the educational programs in their home countries are different from school programs in the U.S. Some students come from rural areas that do not have educational programs beyond secondary schools (including grades 7-9), so students' experiences not only vary, but may be limited. In order for students to meet all graduation requirements, pass three exit-level TAAS tests, and learn a second language, they must make a major commitment to remaining in school and working very hard.

The grade distribution of former newcomers is indicative of students making progress and moving towards the attainment of a high school diploma. It is noteworthy that most former newcomers from the first and second year of program implementation are classified as juniors and seniors. In the 1993-94 school year, 42 former newcomers were classified as seniors and 26 (62%) met all of the graduation requirements. Of the remaining 16 students, 8 (50%) were missing one of the TAAS tests, 5 (31%) were missing both academic credits and TAAS tests, and 3 (19%) had dropped out of high school sometime during their last year in high school.

See Figure 32 for the grade distribution of former newcomers.

FIGURE 32
1993-94 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS PROGRAM
GRADE DISTRIBUTION OF FORMER TITLE VII NEWCOMERS

GRADE	1990-91 NEWCOMERS	1991-92 NEWCOMERS	1992-93 NEWCOMERS
9	0	1	31
10	5	14	45
11	5	24	21
12	22	14	6
TOTAL	**32**	**53**	**103**

INTERVIEWS WITH FORMER NEWCOMERS

During the 1994 spring semester, a concerted effort was made by the program staff to reach approximately 130 former newcomers on their school campuses. Some former students transferred to other AISD high school campuses, some students were absent, others had schedule conflicts, others had dropped out or withdrawn, and some students could not be reached. A total of 98 (75%) former newcomers were interviewed by primarily the teacher assistant. The purpose of the interviews was to collect information from the students' perspective, and to determine if any intervention was necessary. The following results

- Almost all (97%) of the former newcomers indicated they were "doing well" in their school work; most of the students were making A's, B's, and C's.
- Almost all of the students (98%) indicated that they would attend tutoring sessions. They listed reading, English, science, mathematics, history, and government as potentially helpful subjects.
- Almost all (98%) of the former students did not participate in extracurricular activities.
- Less than one half (44%) of the students said they were working part time or full time after school and/or on the weekend. The average former newcomer worked an average of 24 hours a week.
- If students were considering dropping out of school, the primary reasons the students gave were family problems and financial necessity that required going to work.

The information collected from the former student interviews will be used for planning and coordinating services with the at-risk programs in the high schools where former newcomers are in attendance.

INTERVIEWS WITH GRADUATING NEWCOMERS

In May 1994, some of the graduating seniors were identified by the program staff and with the cooperation of the school personnel interviews with students were scheduled. Because of time constraints it was not possible to interview all of the students at all program sites. Forty-two former newcomers were classified as seniors, but not all of them had the required number of credits and TAAS requirements. Eight students were interviewed, six graduated, and two former newcomers were missing one of the TAAS tests. Both students had plans to participate in the intensive summer school program with the goal being to take the missing test in July and graduate in August. The following narratives reflect some of the achievements experienced by immigrant students in AISD. The names have been changed to protect the identity of the students.

CARLOS RAFAEL

Carlos Rafael grew up in rural Veracruz and was able to finish secondary school (grades 7-9) in his home country. His parents and brothers were already in the United States, and he decided to join them in the summer of 1990. Carlos Rafael started school immediately and attended the Newcomers Program at Lanier High School, then transferred to Reagan High School, and graduated in May 1994. From his time in the program, he recalled his teacher, using the computers, and working in small groups as having been very helpful. Working in groups carried over to his classes in government and economics. He has been involved with the City of Austin Soccer Team; he attended his prom; and he has been recognized as an "Outstanding Student" for his academic achievements. He studied art for four years and enjoys drawing, working with oil paint, and doing sculpture. His artistic endeavors were acknowledged when he was selected as the recipient of the Amado Peña Scholarship for $500. Carlos Rafael plans to attend Austin Community College. All through his high school years, he has been employed doing custodial and restaurant work. His parents, family, some friends, and his girlfriend all encouraged and supported him with his schooling. *His suggestions to newcomers include "practicing English, getting involved in school activities, and not giving up."*

MARÍA CECILIA

María Cecilia completed primary school (grades 1-6) before she came to the United States. She started middle school but had to drop out for financial reasons. She worked as a housekeeper for approximately one year and was able to return to school in the 1990 fall semester. She has been on the honor roll, has received an AISD Board of Trustee's Scholarship award for four years, graduated in the top 5% of her class, and was a member of the National Honor Society. María Cecilia was motivated by the desire to be someone and to attain some financial security. Her oldest sister and boyfriend were very supportive of her academic endeavors, and provided encouragement as she worked and continued to attend her classes. Her short-range plan is to work and save money for college. She is in the process of arranging her citizenship paperwork. María Cecilia is considering international law, or environmental science as possible career options. *Her advice to newcomers is "to practice English by speaking with people who do not speak Spanish, to learn to be self-affirming, and to believe that each student can make a difference." In her opinion, teachers who do not care for students can have a negative impact on students and she also thinks a bilingual counselor could be helpful in assisting students to understand themselves better.*

DANIEL

Daniel was born in the United States, but at age three he went to live with his family in Korea. He attended school there until he finished the first semester of 10th grade, when he relocated to the U.S. Daniel had some English instruction in his home country but almost no oral practice in the language. He started school immediately at Austin High School, the first American school he had ever attended. From his days as a newcomer he remembers the three hours set aside for English instruction, and that the time spent was helpful in adjusting to the school and its environment. Daniel joined the Math Club at school and has participated in competitions. While in high school he participated in an internship program with one of the local computer companies. Daniel was recognized for his studiousness: he received the AISD Board Trustee Scholarship for two years and was given a Presidential Academic Award. By taking the college placement tests Daniel received four hours in calculus and three hours in chemistry. He plans to attend the University of Texas in Austin and study electrical engineering. Daniel's father is very proud of his son's achievements. *In Daniel's opinion for students to complete high school, "they must make the decision to learn, and studying and learning require hard work and commitment."*

MARTA ALICIA

Marta Alicia came to Austin in 1990 from a rural community in Honduras, and within four months was enrolled in her first American school. She finished eighth grade in her home country and has attended three Austin high schools. She has very fond memories of her ESL teacher while she participated in the Newcomers Program. Marta Alicia is a single parent and at times had many absences, but she was able to work through all those early difficulties. Her mother has been very supportive of her academic endeavors, and has provided encouragement and a great deal of assistance. Marta Alicia and her mother are very proud of her having been able to complete her studies and receive her high school diploma. Her plans are to work for one year and then go on to college. *Her advice for students is "not to give up, and to spend the necessary time to learn English in order to survive in the United States."*

DIEGO ENRIQUE

Diego Enrique came to the United States at age 16, after finishing 10th grade in an urban district in Mexico. He enrolled in school almost immediately but withdrew because he needed to work to help his family. After a year of working as a landscaper, he returned to school and joined the Newcomers Program. He recalled the instruction in reading and writing as having been very precise and helpful. His teacher was very helpful and involved with Diego's family. As a sophomore he participated in the soccer team and was a member of the TAME Association (a group for future engineers) for two years. He discontinued his activities with TAME because he was employed at a local grocery store, and the meetings were in the evening. Diego is working at a restaurant and trying to finalize his residency paperwork. His plan is to attend college and become an engineer. *His advice to newcomers is "to find good friends who encourage you to stay in school and who themselves are good students. Students must make the effort to stay in school even when they have problems. It is important to persevere."*

In summary, former newcomers expressed several recurring themes related to their completion of high school: the constant support from family and friends; early commitment and perseverance in attaining a high school diploma regardless of obstacles; integration into the school culture through school involvement, extracurricular activities, and retaining outside interests; and assistance from a teacher in a special program, and/or a school mentor.

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González, R.M. (1994). FEEDBACK: Limited-English-proficient students in AISD 1993-94 (ORE Pub. No. 93.22). Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.

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González, R.M. & Wilkinson, D. (1993). FEEDBACK: Limited-English-proficient students in AISD 1992-93 (ORE Pub. No. 92.42). Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.

Wilkinson, D., & Ligon, G. (Eds.) (1992). IMPACT: How ORE findings have affected decisions in Austin and beyond! (ORE Pub. No. 91.20). Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District, Office of Research and Evaluation.

CHECKLIST FOR ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT

Grant #: _____ Project Title: Title VII Bilingual Education Transition Program
School District: Austin Independent School District City/State: Austin, Texas
Report Submitted By: Nilda Garcia, Administrative Supervisor
Report Prepared By: Rosa María González, Evaluation Associate

	Item/Page
1. **Introduction** The report includes: *(Not a requirement, but recommended)* 1.1 Description of project context: community, school, and district setting. *(Not a requirement, but recommended)*	1.1/ 2-3
1.2 Description of student characteristics: *educational background, needs, and competencies* of the limited English proficient (LEP) students served [500.51(a)]	1.2/ 7-9
1.3 List of project goals and objectives for students, staff, and parents, as applicable. *(Not a requirement, but recommended)*	1.3/ 5
1.4 Description of project implementation data for LEP students, English proficient (LEP) students, and former LEP students including: Amount of time (in years or months) participants received instructional services in the project, and, as appropriate, in another instructional setting [500.50(b)(3)(ii)(A)];	1.4/ 5, 40-41
The *specific educational activities* undertaken pursuant to the project [500.51(b)]	20-24, 30-32
The pedagogical *materials, methods, and techniques* used in the program [500.51(c)];	35-37
With respect to classroom activities, the relative *instructional time* spent with students on specific tasks [500.51(d)] and	35-37
The specific activities undertaken to improve *pre-referral evaluation procedures* and instructional programs for LEP children who may be handicapped or gifted and talented [500.51(f)].	N/A
1.5 Information on the educational, professional *qualifications* and *language competencies* of staff responsible for planning and operating the project [500.51(e)].	1.5/ 23, 27
1.6 Information on parent and community involvement activities, if applicable. *(Not a requirement, but recommended)*	1.6/ 28, 20-21
2. **Methodology** The report includes information regarding: 2.1 *Use of a comparison group*. Evaluation design includes a measure of the educational progress of project participants when measured against an appropriate *non-project comparison group* [500.50(b)(1)].	2.1/ 10-13
2.2 *Representativeness of evaluation findings*. Evaluation results are computed so that the conclusions apply to the persons, schools, or agencies served by the project [500.50(b)(2)(i)].	2.2/ 10-19
2.3 *Reliability and validity of evaluation instruments*. The instruments used are appropriate and consider factors such as age, grade, language, degree of language fluency, and background of the persons served by the project [500.50(b)(2)(ii)].	2.3/ 10-11
The report includes information regarding: 2.4 *Objectivity of procedures*. The procedures provide objective measures of the academic achievement of participants related to English language proficiency, native or second language proficiency (for programs of Developmental Bilingual Education [DBE]), and other subject matter areas [500.50(b)(2)(iv)].	2.4/ 10-14
2.5 *Method and frequency of data collection and summary of data analysis* procedures. Evaluation procedures used minimize error by ensuring [500.50(b)(2)(iii)]: _____ testing at twelve month intervals;	2.5/ 10-11
_____ proper administration and accurate scoring and transcription of results; and	10-11
_____ use of analysis and reporting procedures appropriate for the data obtained.	10-11

Checklist for Project Directors Preparing ESEA Title VII, Part A, Annual Evaluation Reports	Item/Page
3. Findings	3.1/
The report includes: 3.1 Information about changes in the context or implementation of the project as described in the **Introduction**, section 1.4 *(Not a requirement, but recommended)*	N/A
The report describes: 3.2 The participants' educational progress toward meeting the proposed objectives including, as appropriate, comparison of academic achievement of project and *non-project comparison groups*:	3.2/
(For all programs, including DBE) measures used to determine the educational progress of project participants when measured against an appropriate non-project comparison group [500.50(b)(1)];	10-14, 16-17
LEP participants' progress in English language proficiency (and in DBE programs, progress in another language) [500.50(b)(3)(ii)(B)];	10-11
(For all programs, including DBE) LEP participants' academic achievement in English language arts and in subject matter areas [500.52(a)(b)]; and	10-14, 16-17
For DBE projects, EP participants' academic achievement in second language arts (i.e., the project language other than English) and in subject matter areas [500.52(a)(b)].	N/A
3.3 The academic progress of former participants in English language classrooms. [500.50(b)(3)(i)(B)] [500.50(b)(3)(ii)(C)].	3.3/ 39-43
3.4 Overall progress achieved is described as measured by changes in rates of student:	3.4/
_____ grade retention [500.52(c)(1)];	18-19
_____ dropout status [500.52(c)(2)];	15
_____ absenteeism [500.52(c)(3)];	17-18
_____ placement in gifted and talented programs [500.52(c)(4)]; and	N/A
_____ enrollment in postsecondary education institutions [500.52(c)(5)].	42-43
4. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations *(Not a requirement, but recommended)*	
The report includes a discussion of:	4.1/
4.1 Objectives met and reasons for not meeting those unachieved.	1
4.2 Project components most and least effective.	4.2/ 33-34
4.3 Unanticipated factors that affected the project outcomes positively and/or negatively.	4.3/ N/A
4.4 Recommended changes to enhance project effectiveness.	4.4/ i, 34

Austin Independent School District

Office of Research and Evaluation

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